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TO

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY.

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WYOMING MASSACRE OF 1763.  
OLD PAXTANG CHURCH.  
A SOLDIER OF THE REVOLUTION.

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WILLIAM HENRY EGLE, M. D.  
H

HARRISBURG, PA.  
HARRISBURG PUBLISHING COMPANY.  
1890.

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THE  
FIRST INDIAN MASSACRE

IN THE

VALLEY OF WYOMING,

FIFTEENTH OCTOBER, 1763.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE WYOMING  
MONUMENT ON JULY 3, 1889, BY

WILLIAM HENRY EGLE, M. D.

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HARRISBURG, PA.  
HARRISBURG PUBLISHING COMPANY.  
1890.

11-10446





S. J.

To the Memory of him,  
Who, in History's Cause,  
Sought out the Truth,  
And right royally gave.



## PREFATORY NOTE.

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The Paper which follows was hastily prepared for the Wyoming Anniversary held at Forty Fort, on the 3d of July, 1889. Owing to the views expressed being so widely different from those held by the historians of Wyoming, it was not received with that candor manifested by the writer in its preparation. While some of those who heard it read, deemed it "defiant," portions of the newspaper press persisted in misrepresenting the facts stated. As a lover of the history and people of Wyoming, there was no desire to distort anything, and no one appreciated this more than that generous soul who has passed out from among men. What had been said was pondered well by him, and after faithful research, he came upon information which to him was convincing. The first intimation had, was a letter of the date of 25th December, 1889, which in part, reads :

"In looking over my grandfather's papers, I came across some pieces of paper much worn, which I had the curiosity to pick out and put together until I got one half of the document that could be read together. Its looks impressed me with the idea of its having been read much and worn in the handling. The contents were somewhat novel to me, and proved to be just what we both had long been seeking, the solution of the massacre of 15th October, 1763. As it is in my grandfather's handwriting, I cannot go back on it, for I have always found him perfectly truthful. The tenor of the

paper is a succinct history of the first attempts at settlement at Wyoming, the hinderances met with, etc., beginning at the beginning and coming down till after the decree of Trenton. *The story as told confirms your theory*, and hence I suppose you are ready to approve its correctness. I reserve the right to make it public at our next meeting at the monument."

Replying promptly to Mr. Jenkins' very kind letter, subsequently the following was received:

"The document of my grandfather is not lengthy, and is of importance only as it sets forth that the massacre of 15th October, 1763, was done by the *savages*. Having made the mistake of suggesting that it was quite as possible that it was done by the forces under Clayton and Elder, whom you endeavored to free from the crime in your address, I desire to present the case in its true light by giving full force and effect to your history and arguments in support of your theory, closing with the fact that we now have the most positive proof that it was done by the savages, and not by the Pennamites. I prefer this course in *vindication of myself*, and not of you, *for you need none*."

This document, perchance unsatisfactory, written by the grandfather of our friend, is given in connection with the address. With it, through the courtesy of the Rev. David Craft, the deposition of Parshall Terry is presented.

In addition, after considerable inquiry, it was found that a copy of the "Narration," written by one of the captives of that massacre, printed in 1767, and which not one of the historians of Wyoming had ever seen, was in existence, and a copy secured. It also is given

herewith, more on account of its rarity than the light shed upon that bloody transaction. It is hoped that this pamphlet will therefore be accepted as an earnest and honest contribution to the History of the Valley of Wyoming.



## THE FIRST MASSACRE AT WYOMING.

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FRIENDS OF WYOMING: I do not know what could have induced your Committee to invite me to take part in the exercises of this Memorial Day of "fair Wyoming," and furthermore, why I should have at the last moment accepted it, when another and an abler one is upon your printed programme to give the Historical Address. It is an old saying that "he who hesitates is lost," and it was either yes or no promptly, and so I am here, to greet you all on this mid-summer day, in the inspiring hope that what I have to say will be calmly weighed ere harsh judgment be given.

I see around me the representatives of those lion-hearted men whose history reads more like a romance than a tragic reality. They are more familiar with the events, the traditions, and the folk-lore of this beautiful valley, aye their whole lives are imbued with its history, and I marvel much why the descendant of a pioneer Swiss-Huguenot settler from interior Pennsylvania should be induced to endeavor if possible to interest, if he does not entertain, you for a brief space of time.

I am a Pennsylvanian in the broadest acceptation of that term. I do not covet descent from the turbulent Connecticut Yankee, the shrewd and avaricious disciples of Penn, the plodding German, or the pugnacious Scotch-Irish, and yet there are traits in all these to be admired, to be honored, and which go to make up our great Pennsylvania family—a State never yet understood by those who are not of it, or who, pre-

judged by descent, parade their own ancestral greatness and belittle that of others. A true Pennsylvanian rises above all this. He sees clearly what has made the greatest Commonwealth among the Union of States—that the characteristics of one class so dovetails into the other that harmony and grandeur is the result. And so, my friends, I have come here to-day with the patriotic impulses of a good Pennsylvanian, humbly to lay before you my tribute to Wyoming.

The history of this valley is familiar to you all. Chapman, and Miner, and Pearce, a trio of honored names, have repeated its story, and no writer in the ages to come can dwell upon the incidents of the past, without recognizing their untold services to its historical literature. And yet, you and I can see that in every instance, whatever in your history was not accomplished by the Connecticut Yankee—however brave and heroic the act—however frightful the desolation, and terrible the suffering,—were far from being appreciated. The causes of all misfortune were laid at the door of those *who were not* of Connecticut. My friends, you have done great injustice to those who befriended Wyoming in her hour of need, and I plainly tell you so. This is exemplified in the account given in the massacre of the first pioneer settlers at Wyoming—the only subject of your history to which I shall fully allude.

This day and hour, and yonder monument, recall to mind the awful tragedy of 1778. Of the dreadful destruction which swept over Wyoming, it is not my province at this time to enter upon. Neither is it my intention to take the part of either Connecticut or



Pennsylvania in the great controversy which ensued, upon the claims the former set up, and which for one-third of a century brought strife and bloodshed where peace and harmony should have reigned. Others more familiar with the events of that sad July day have given the world its history, and there is no more tearful story of woe and desolation than that which then befell this beautiful valley.

A prior incident, however, in the history of Wyoming claims our attention for a few brief moments to-day, and it is well to carefully look over the records of the past, now and then, to correct errors in the light of new facts, and smooth over the rough outlines of set tradition.

In the latter part of the year 1762, and the early spring of 1763, some twenty families from Connecticut settled upon lands claimed by the Susquehanna Company of that colony. We are not here to inquire by what right these settlers came. Their new-foundland was one of peace. Their first summer had been one of prosperity—the crops promised an abundant yield—and the enterprising backwoodsmen looked forward to a season of quiet happiness.

“ Not full the measure of domestic peace

To them, the forest turning into fields;

Not theirs from boding fears to find release,

Or sleep the sleep for which fatigue appeals;

Their sweating labor winning slow increase

Of promis'd store the furrow'd soil reveals;

For, night by night, the settler's fireside group

May, ringing in their ears, wake to the prowler's  
whoop.

“ From mountain slope, or copse, or reedy sedge,  
 From hazel clump or alder’s cov’ring shade.  
 With reeking knife, and ire of keener edge,  
 And willing hand to drive the piercing blade ;  
 And glitt’ring eyes that bitter deeds presage,  
 Gairish in pomp of rudest taste display’d,  
 The Iroquois, with hellish hate imbued,  
 Would glut on helpless babes his savage thirst for  
 blood.

“ Who yet with the authentic pen has shed  
 The light of truth historic on this race ?  
 Grim Torture’s sons!—wielding the hatchet red,  
 Firing the splints thrust into breast and face ;  
 Stripping with gory blade the captive’s head,  
 Of that fair crown a Maker put in place.  
 For lengthen’d ages, but one Nero sprung ;  
 These, each and all alike, spare neither old nor  
 young.”

The Six Nations Indians, always treacherously inclined, made serious complaints to the Provincial authorities of Pennsylvania regarding the Connecticut people for having settled upon land *which had not been purchased from them*. At first little notice was taken of the matter, but again and again the complaints were repeated. In obedience thereto, and to conciliate the Indians, Gov. Hamilton issued a proclamation which reads as follows :

“ A PROCLAMATION.—Whereas, divers Persons, the natural born subjects of His Majesty, belonging to some of the Neighbouring Colonies have, without any License or Grant from the Honourable the Proprietaries

of this Province, or Authority from this Government, made several Attempts, in Bodies, to possess themselves of & settle upon a large Tract of Land within the limits of this Province, not yet purchased from the Indians, lying at and between Wyoming, on the River Susquehanna, and Cushietunck, on the River Delaware, and in the upper parts of Northampton County; and have also endeavoured to persuade and inveigle many of the inhabitants of this and neighboring Provinces to confederate and join with them in such their illegal and dangerous Designs, and to assist in settling & holding the said Lands by strong hand; And Whereas, the Delawares and other Tribes of Indians who reside within that Tract of Country between Wyoming and Cushietunck, and also the Six Nations Indians, have, as well at public Treaties as at divers other Times, repeatedly made Complaints and Remonstrances to me against the said Practices and Attempts & in the most earnest manner requested & insisted that the said Intruders should be removed by the Government to which they belonged, or by me, & declared if this was not done the Indians would come & remove them by Force, and do themselves Justice; but desired that the said intruders might be previously acquainted therewith, that they might not pretend ignorance; And Whereas, notwithstanding I have already issued two Proclamations, viz: the first dated in February 1761, and the second dated the 16th day of September following, to apprise the said intruders of their danger, and to forbid their settling on the said Lands, and strictly enjoining & requiring in His Majesty's Name, all those who had presumed to settle on any part

thereof, immediately to depart & move away from the same; yet I have lately received Information and fresh Complaints from the said Indians that divers Persons in contempt of such my several Proclamations, and the Threats of the Indians, do still persist in their said Design, and are now actually settling on divers parts of the said Lands about Wyoming and Cushietunck.

“Wherefore, as well to continue my endeavours to preserve the peace and friendship which is now so happily restored and subsisting between us and the Indians, and to prevent the mischievous and terrible consequences of their carrying into execution such their threats, from which I am greatly apprehensive the Indians cannot any longer be restrained, if the said intruders shall not immediately relinquish their designs of settling the said lands, as also again to warn any of the inhabitants of this Province from being unwarily drawn in to join the said intruders in such their unjust designs of making settlements in the said Indian country, I have judged it proper, before any force shall be used against the said intruders, by and with the advice of this Council, to issue this my Third Proclamation, hereby again strictly subjoining and requiring in His Majesty’s name, all and every person and persons already settled and residing on the said lands, (Indians excepted,) immediately to depart and move away from the same. And do hereby forbid all His Majesty’s Subjects of this or any other Province or Colony, on any pretence whatsoever, to intrude upon, settle or possess any of the said Lands or any other Lands within the Limits of this Province, not yet purchased of the Indians, as they will answer the contrary at their Peril,

and on pain of being immediately prosecuted with the utmost Rigor of the Law. And hereby also restricting, charging, enjoining & requiring all Sheriffs, Magistrates, Peace Officers, and all other His Majesty's liege People within this Province, to exert themselves and use their utmost Endeavours to prosecute and bring to Justice & condign Punishment, all Offenders in the Premises."

(Signed)

"JAMES HAMILTON."

It is true that his Excellency, two years before, when the lands in Wyoming were being surveyed, issued the said proclamations, yet these were probably not placed in possession of the members of the Connecticut Susquehanna Company. The authorities of Northampton county, by direction of the Governor, it is presumed, notified the settlers, who answered, "that they claimed under the Connecticut government and an Indian purchase, and that they would hold their lands until it was decided by the highest authority in whom the true title was vested."

Gov. Hamilton represented the case to the Governor of Connecticut, as well as to Sir William Johnson, his majesty's superintendent of Indian affairs. We hear nothing further until the Lancaster conference with the Six Nations Indians in August, 1762, when the Governor alluded to the Indian sale of lands at Wyoming. In reply, Thomas King, an Oneida chief, "without consulting any of the other chiefs," so reads the record, "rose up and spoke:"

"Brother: It is very well known that the Land was sold by the Six Nations; some are here now that sold that land; it was sold for Two Thousand Dol-

lars, but it was not sold by our Consent in publick Council; *it was as it were stolen from us.* Some people said that my name was to it, on which I went down immediately to Connecticut to see whether it was or not, and found it was not; I brought a paper back from Connecticut, which I shall shew to the Governor. Had I not gone down to Connecticut, the Lands would have been all settled up to Wyomink as far as Awicka, Twelve miles on this side of Chenango.”

Almost a year elapsed before the Governor issued the proclamation just read in your hearing, and it is doubted if he would even then have issued it, preferring to leave its adjustment to Sir William Johnson had not the pressure of the Quaker Assembly been brought to bear, and he was thus compelled to do that which he did not believe was perchance proper under the circumstances. This was followed up the month following by voluminous instructions to Col. James Burd, commanding the Provincial forces at Fort Augusta, [Sunbury,] and Thomas McKee, a well known and influential Indian trader on the Susquehanna. Here they are :

“ I have lately received Intelligence with fresh Complaints from the Indians at Wyoming, that the Connecticut People still persist in prosecuting their Scheme of settling the Lands about Wyoming, and at & about Cushietunck ; And with the advice of the Council, I have thought it proper to issue a third Proclamation on that occasion, & to desire that you will immediately take a journey to Wyoming, with such assistance as you shall judge proper to take along with you, and use your best endeavours to persuade or drive away all

the White People that you shall find settled, or about to settle there, or on any lands not yet purchased from the Indians.

“Before you shew yourself amongst them, you will gain all the Information and Light you can into their Designs, what their numbers are, & learn the names of as many as you can; where settled, or about to settle; What numbers (and from whence) they expect to join them.

“On your arrival amongst them, you will convene the heads of them, & after reading the Proclamation, expostulate with them about the injustice, Absurdity and Danger of their attempting to settle there, and let them know that I expect and require of them by you, that they shall all immediately Depart and quit their Settlements and if they shall agree to go away peaceably, You will then after their departure, see all their Buildings and Improvements destroyed; and in case they refuse to comply, You will then acquaint them that they may rest assured that besides the danger they may be in from the resentment of the Indians, this Government will never permit them to continue there; and that therefore it would be most advisable for them to return peaceably to their own Country, & desist entirely from their design of making any more Settlements there.

“If you find these Expostulations and persuasive means shall not succeed, & that you can do it without danger of Resistance from a Superior Force, and risque of Bloodshed (which by no means hazard) I would have you, either by Stratagem or Force, to get three or four of the ringleaders, or others of them, apprehended



and carried to the Goal at Lancaster, sending with them a proper force & Mittimus under your hands & Seals, there to wait my further orders.

“And if that cannot be done, you will endeavor to get the names of as many of them as you can, in order that they may be prosecuted at Law, and further measures taken with them, as shall at your Return be judged most proper. For this end I have armed you with a special Commission, constituting you Magistrates of the Counties of Northampton, Berks, and Lancaster, but I imagine, the Lands where they are settling must be in Northampton County.

“You will please keep a Journal of your Proceedings, and on your return report the same to me in writing under your hands, with an Account of your Expences, that orders may be given for the discharge thereof.”

As mentioned with reference to the former proclamations, it is doubtful if any of the settlers saw or heard of the official document of the Governor, inasmuch as it is not upon record that Col. Burd or Mr. McKee ever went upon their errand, in obedience to their instructions. Just here, let me say, that Mr. Miner, who follows Mr. Chapman, makes a statement which is far from correct. It was that Colonel James Boyd, on being “ordered by Governor Hamilton to repair to Wyoming, found the valley abandoned by the Indians, who had scalped those they had killed and carried away their captives and plunder. The bodies of the slain lay strewed upon the field and Colonel Boyd, having caused them to be decently interred, withdrew with his detachment down the river.” The facts are that



Colonel James Burd, who is undoubtedly the person alluded to as Colonel James Boyd, did not reach Wyoming prior to the terrible calamity which befell the Connecticut settlers during the autumn of that year.

As previously stated, it was the Six Nations Indians who made complaint, not the Delawares. These finding their complaints unheeded, determined, as is the case generally with desperate characters, to take the matter into their own hands. The marauding party had made their way down the West Branch of the Susquehanna river some distance from the fort at Shamokin, unperceived, where the Provincial troops were guarding the frontiers, and crossing the river at the mouth of the Juniata near Clark's Ferry moved east until they reached the lovely Kittatinny valley through the gap in the North mountain at Manada creek. Here they committed many murders, destroyed much property, secured a large number of scalps, and then quickly escaped through the Toliheo, now the Indian-town gap, thus eluding the vigilance of the scouts ranging along the base of the mountain, until they found their way into the Wyoming valley. Here the Connecticut settlers were quietly and peaceably pursuing their avocations. In an unguarded hour most of the inhabitants lost their lives or were taken into captivity, while their cabins and stock were committed to the flames.

A thrilling narrative of this bloody affair (the first massacre in the Valley) was published by one of the survivors, after his escape from captivity, and neither at that time or at any other period until the first historian began to make up the history of this locality,

was there even an intimation that this tragedy was inaugurated, plotted, or even approved of by the Pennsylvania authorities. The infamous transaction was conceived, planned, and carried out by those infernal red savages from New York, the Cayugas and Oneidas. The Delawares and Shawanese, especially the latter, with all their intrigue, treachery, and bloodthirstiness, would gladly have been the willing instruments, in this indiscriminate slaughter, if but "the sign" had been given. The "untutored savage" of America has left many a bloody page upon our history, and I have no "sentimentalism" for him. From the massacre of Commissary Osset's colony on the Delaware, in 1631, until the last Indian war-whoop upon the waters of the Allegheny, in 1791, the aborigine has written his name in blood-hideous characters never to be effaced.

At this crisis, Col. John Elder, the revered Minister of Paxtang and Derry, who held a commission in the Provincial service, and commanded a battalion of Rangers east of the Susquehanna, between the North and the South mountains, although he had previously requested permission, which was refused by the proprietary governor, to send a body of scouts into the Indian country, the deadly work of the savages in his own neighborhood left no alternative at this time, and he pushed forward a force of eighty soldiers and volunteers, under command of Major Asher Clayton, in hot pursuit of the fugitives. Fleet of foot they were, but the red demons of the forest were far upon their retreat northward. From their situation at Fort Hunter, on the Susquehanna, five miles above Harrisburg, the company of Rangers made rapid way along

and over the mountains, hoping to head off the Indians who it seems had entered the Wyoming valley just two days before their arrival. In the language of one of Wyoming's poets, elsewhere quoted, (Caleb E. Wright,)

“The housewife o'er her task is bent,  
 The artless children all at play ;  
 When through the door in fierce array  
 Rushes the hideous visitant ;—  
 Wolves less intent upon their prey !—  
 The peaceful throngs of other climes  
 Beneath the banner of the law,  
 In hearing of the welcome chimes  
 That saints to sweet communion draw ;  
 May vainly judge the dark abyss,  
 Whelming the soul in hours like this.  
 Not mother's prayer nor infant's cry,  
 Nor wail in brutal clutch, avails ;  
 The cord that knits humanity,  
 That love that over all prevails,—  
 The love which on the fatal tree  
 Set crime from condemnation free,  
 A passion is of Heav'nly grace,—  
*That* in the savage has no place.”

Thus in one fell hour the settlement was wiped out of existence.

It was a sickening sight which met the eyes of these scouts. Many of them had lost relatives and friends at the hands of the savages, and they were eager to pursue them to their very cabins on the lakes. But such a course would have resulted disastrously.

No better description is needed of what they saw there, than is found in the Pennsylvania Gazette, Number 1818, for October 27, 1763. It is an extract from a letter dated at Paxtang, Lancaster county, October 23, 1763 :

“Our party under Captain Clayton is returned from Wyoming, where they met no Indians, but found the New Englanders, who had been killed and scalped a day or two before they got there. They buried the Dead, nine Men and one Woman, who had been most cruelly butchered; the Woman was roasted, and had two Hinges in her Hands, supposed to have been put in red hot; and several of the Men had Awls thrust into their Eyes, and Spears, Arrows, Pitchforks, &c., sticking in their Bodies. They burned what Houses the Indians left, and destroyed a Quantity of Indian Corn. The Enemy’s tracks were up the River towards Wighalousing.”

For this act of burning the remaining cabins of the Connecticut settlers, and destroying the fields of corn left standing, your Wyoming historians have not failed to denounce it as unmerciful and villainous. It may appear so, and yet an unprejudiced mind, under no circumstance would impute the act to any other motive but that ascribed—of preventing the same from falling into the hands of the enemy, for surely it would have furnished a magazine of food to the murderous and marauding. The men who led the party were not of that class who had lost all the dictates of humanity. They were merciful and kind—whatever the provocation. It was done to prevent the return of the Connecticut settlers, some say, but in that sanguinary hour

this would have had little weight, the Connecticut or Pennsylvania claim was never taken into consideration at such a time—for the shocking sight moved the brave Rangers to tears. The Scotch-Irish frontiersman who composed this band of scouts were not to be influenced by Quaker clamor or Proprietary misrule. From their very first settlement in Pennsylvania down to the present year of grace, Anno Domini 1889, they are the same humane people, yet as determined and fearless as the Kittatinny Mountains which looked down upon their backwoods homes. There are attributes in the Scotch-Irish make-up which have entered largely into these notable characteristics of Pennsylvania manhood.

And who were these men?

In a letter which Charles Miner, your great historian, wrote, subsequent to the appearance of his history, speaking of the Rev. John Elder, he held this language:

“I am greatly struck with the evidences of learning, talent, and spirit displayed by the Rev. Mr. Elder. He was beyond doubt the most extraordinary man of early Pennsylvania history. . . . He was certainly a very extraordinary man, of most extensive influence—full of activity and enterprise, learned, pious, and a ready writer. I take him to have been of the old Cameronian blood. Had his lot been cast in New England he would have been a leader of the Puritans. If I ever publish another edition of my ‘Wyoming,’ I will endeavor to do justice to him. I hope some one may draw up a full memoir of his life, and a narrative, well digested, of his times.”

Of Major Asher Clayton I trust I may be permitted

to say a word. He was one of the most prominent officers of the French and Indian war—was of a good family, an excellent soldier, a noble-hearted and Christian gentleman. He would have abhorred an unkind or indecent act as one would shrink from a deadly reptile.

It has been intimated that Captain Lazarus Stewart was there—he who fell at the fore-front of battle on that dark day of July, 1778. *But he was not!* No man has been more villified or maligned than that brave yet perchance injudicious officer. Fear was not in his make up. But I come not to praise this Cæsar of yours.

And now, my friends, permit me to digress for a few moments, and refer briefly to certain portions of an address delivered by the learned Editor of the Philadelphia "*Press*," at the commencement of Union College, Schenectady, on June 26, wherein he said:

"In 1784, a great flood swept the teeming valley of the Susquehanna, carrying death, havoc, and destruction on its tumultuous bosom. Untold anguish, suffering, and starvation followed. The Legislature was urged to send relief to the hapless sufferers, but they were Yankees from Connecticut, and it was stolidly deaf to their piteous cries. Nay more, it seized the opportunity to proscribe them as trespassers, and, with a barbarity that is almost beyond belief, the horrors of a military scourge were added to the blight of nature's calamity, and many escaped the terrors of the flood only to perish by the more cruel sword or to become victims of the not more savage wolves of the forest to which they were driven."

Now, as veritable Pennsylvanians, as I know you all are, let us see how much of truth there is in this statement. Under the decree of Trenton, the Pennsylvania Commissioners repaired to Wyoming with instructions to inquire "into the cases of the settlers, and to encourage, as much as possible, reasonable and friendly compromises between the parties claiming," and that it was "highly improper that any proceedings at law should be had for the recovery of any lands or tenements during the said inquiry." It was also provided that "all further proceedings be stayed." The chairman of this commission was the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, an alumnus of the College of New Jersey and also of Yale, a Presbyterian clergyman, and a member of the Confederated Continental Congress. No abler man could have been sent on this peace-errand, but he was on the side of Pennsylvania, and the leaders of the settlers made light of the commissioners. Unfortunately, the Pennsylvania claimants, who were wholly residents of Philadelphia, had a shrewd and unscrupulous attorney, Captain Alexander Patterson—and to him the commissioners gave ear. As a result, little was accomplished, and the commissioners in August, 1783, reported their failure to the General Assembly. That body seems at the time to have been under the influence of the Philadelphia land-owners, and such action was taken by them as was in consonance with the suggestions and views of Patterson. Two companies of State troops were sent to Wyoming ostensibly for protection against the Indians when there were none in arms.

In the spring of 1784, following these unfruitful



labors, there was a terrible ice flood in the Susquehanna, which, although destructive of many of the buildings and fences of the settlers, *only one life was lost*. It was not a Conemaugh cataclysm.

President Dickinson, true to the instincts of his nobility of manhood, sent this brief message to the Assembly :

“GENTLEMEN: The late inundation having reduced many of the inhabitants at Wyoming to great distress, we should be glad if your honorable House would be pleased to make some immediate provision for their relief.

(Signed)

JOHN DICKINSON.

*Phila., March 31, 1784.*

“Ordered to lie on the table.”

Of course, nothing was done by that illustrious (?) body, and it was left to the charitable inhabitants of the adjoining counties to send relief. And this was forthcoming—Lancaster, and Berks, and Cumberland, contributed flour and grain—and the necessities of the Wyoming people *were* relieved.

Now for the next statement. Under orders by irresponsible parties, the troops at Wyoming, in May following, began to carry out a system of eviction against the Connecticut settlers. The poor people, driven from their houses, were well on their way to the Delaware, when the State authorities put a stop to these high-handed outrages, and the settlers were persuaded to return to their former homes. I have not words strong enough to denounce this outrage, yet I could not with all the polish of rhetoric or eloquence of the orator referred to, have had such a poor opinion of this



dear old Commonwealth to have proclaimed this upon the house-tops. *Not one perished by the sword.*

And so I close. If I have come into contact with those who have held to thread-bare tradition, if the facts I have briefly presented should fail to convince them that I am correct—unlike the red demon of the forest of a century or more ago, I shall not delight to have their scalps hanging to my belt, but will leave them to their own reflections. The few brief hours allowed me for preparation have so crowded thought, without the privilege of proper elucidation, that what I have said may appear to be unsatisfactory. An historical address requires time, care, research, and above all conciseness. If what I have said has any merit, it is *brevity*. And yet I cannot lay aside these few leaflets, without tendering my hearty congratulations to the people of this favored valley, so rich and yet so sad with historic incident; and you people of Wyoming do well, in coming here upon the anniversary of this memorial day of yours to offer your votive wreaths at the place where lie your dead. They died that you might live. They have left this heritage to you and your children. And yet not yours, but that of the people of Pennsylvania in general.

You people of Wyoming are too selfish—you have closely garnered up your chosen history, claiming it as your own birth-right—scarcely permitting any one to share with you in honoring or revering the memories of those who fell upon this fated field. For the true-hearted Pennsylvanian of whatever descent, I claim a part. The Scotch-Irish, the German, and Swiss-Huguenot, would take as much interest in your sad his-

tory as the descendants of the Connecticut Yankees, but you would not. You have wrapped yourselves up in your own selfish pride of birth, and ignored the sympathy of your fellow-citizens in other portions of the great State we rejoice to be natives of. Let it be otherwise in the years to come. Let all the sons of Pennsylvania know that they are welcome here, welcome to your history, welcome to all the hallowed memories of this lovely valley. It will be better for all—for if there is one thing above all others common in this grand old Commonwealth of ours—it is its history—its dark and light pages—its sunshine and its gloom—yet noble from its beginnings, and triumphant down through its more than two centuries of prosperity and happiness.

APPENDIX.



## THE MEMORIAL.

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[This memorial to the Assembly of Pennsylvania is imperfect, and, where we are not satisfied as to the exact wording, the blank has been left between the brackets. It has been deemed proper, however, to give it in full, from the fact that it was the document alluded to by Mr. Jenkins.]

“ *The Hon’ble The [Repre]sentatives of the Freemen of [the Commonwealth of] Pennsylvania in Gen’l Assembly met :*

The petition and address of John [Franklin, and John Jenkins] In behalf of themselves and others: their Constituents [Inhabitants] Settlers and Claimers of Lands in that Territory [situated on the] Waters of the River Susquehanna under the claim [of Connecticut,] Most Respectfully sheweth :

That in the year 1754 a large number of the Inh[abitants of] Connecticut (having obtained the consent of the [Assembly) made a] Bona-fide purchase of the Six Nations of Indi[ans, of all the] Country on the Waters of the River Susquehanna [situated] East of the N. East branch of said River extending [six miles East] and Twenty Miles West, the whole Breadth of the [42nd Degree of] Latitude, for a valuable Consideration paid them, [the aforesaid] Indians gave them a good and ample de[ed for the same] According to the [ ] to be fully with [ ] Connecticut gra[nt ] a subsequent gra[nt in the] the Name of the Susquehanna company ; and in 1755 proceeded to Locate

and survey valuable lands on the North East Branch of the said River; That in 1762 a large number of Proprietors takes possession of said land for themselves and their associates and makes large improvements thereupon. Dispossessed by the Savages in October, 1763; that in 1769 upwards of four hundred again resumed there possessions and were increasing for a Number of successive years, among which Proprietors and settlers were your Petitioners and those whom we Represent, regulated by the Laws of the Colony of Connecticut, Planted ourselves and families, subdued the Rugged wilderness to a state of Maturity.

That at the Commencement of the late War we had become very numerous and populous, Extended our settlements nearly the whole breadth of the 42 Degree.

That the State of Connecticut Exercised a full jurisdiction over us for a great number of Years, and until the decree at Trenton, December 30, 1782. A Complete Civil and Military Establishment was erected According to the Laws of said State of [ We have] Planted and organized and lived Protected and happy [ until the ] War put a stop to — We furnished the Continental army with a number of Valible Officers and Soldiers, and left our Settlem't [weak and unguard]ed against the attack of the savages and those of a [ savage n]ature.

[ ] our sufferings Were intolerable During the War- [ ] our strength fell a sacrifice to the [ ]clent [ ] fury [ ] our streets covered with the b[lood] of the slain [ ] less multiplied our whole settlement laid Desolate [ ] in a Most Inhuman Manner through the Wilderness [ ]

Destitute and Naked [ ] Most pitifull and [ ]  
 [ ] licate feeling of humanity  
 [ ] no]t willing to become burthensome to our  
 friends and fellow [ ] orld and Having a [ ]  
 Zeal for our Country's [ ] count all the Dangers  
 [ ] surviving inhabitants [ ] settle[m] [ ]

Yet notwithstanding the Depredations our numbers  
 [ ] increasing to upwards of five thousand souls  
 Extended our settlements as usual nearly the whole  
 breadth of the 42 Degree on Each side of the aforesaid  
 River. Though we Have Met with Repeated opposi-  
 tion and sustained the loss of Much property by op-  
 posing Claimants and have received no Recompense  
 therefor.

Our only Claim to the aforesaid Land originated from  
 our Purchase Made of the natives under prior grants  
 from the State of Connecticut antecedent to the Settle-  
 ment of jurisdiction Territorys Together with our pos-  
 sessions and occupancy. Previous to any other grant  
 of said Land which we ever conceived constituted an  
 indisputable Title

The Change of Jurisdiction by the Court at Trenton  
 is not Material to us provided we can live protected  
 and happy, that our lives, liberties, reputations and  
 property are duly secured to us beyond the Reach of  
 the overbearing [ ] and designing; that we can  
 peaceably enjoy our property and the blessings of civil  
 government on constitutional principles; but we were  
 Never apprehensive that the change of government  
 could by any means be construed or understood to Ef-  
 fect our possession of property, the authority Aforesaid  
 [ ] and Cha[ ] as full and [ ] Custom

or Usage [ ] that all Judicial Proceedings [ ]  
 hold at said Westmoreland [ ] said [ ] lyed and  
 confe[ ]

aforesaid to your Honor [ ] Earnestly hope you  
 will gra[ ] your Petitioners, and to th[ ]  
 lent State and w[ ] People under your Constitu-  
 tion [ ] grant us Relief as you [ ]  
 th[ ]

We as in Duty bound will ever [pray.]

(Signed)

JNO F[RANKLIN.]

JNO JEN[KINS.]

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#### DEPOSITION OF PARSHALL TERRY.

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[The following deposition confirms the statements made in the "Memorial" of John Franklin and John Jenkins. It is, says the Rev. David Craft, "one of the most important and valuable papers relating to the first settlement of the New England people in the Valley of Wyoming. Mr. Terry was one of the earliest settlers there, was in Forty Fort at the time of the battle, remained there for several days afterwards, when, finding the Indians had destroyed every means of subsistence, was compelled with the few others who had determined to hold possession with him at Wyoming, to return eastward.]

Parshall Terry being duly sworn, says that in the year 1762, he being then an inhabitant of Goshen, in the State, (then Province,) of New York, also being a



proprietor in the Connecticut Susquehannah Purchase, that being informed that the company of proprietors had granted two townships, ten miles square each, as a gratuity to the first 200 settlers, (then being proprietors,) or in proportion to a less number, conditioned that said settlers go on and hold possession for the company for the term of five years.

That as near as he can recollect, some time about the last of August of the same year, the deponent with ninety-three others, mostly from Connecticut, went on to Wyoming, that they carried and took with them horses and farming utensils for the purpose of carrying on business in the line of farming, that he well recollects the names of a number who went on in company with him whose names are as follows:

John Jenkins,	Timothy Hollister, Jr.,
William Buck,	Isaac Hollister,
Oliver Smith,	Thomas Marsh,
Abel Pierce,	Matthew Smith,
Obadiah Gore,	Benjamin Davis,
Daniel Gore,	George Minor,
Isaac Underwood,	Nath'l Hollister,
Isaac Bennett,	John Smith,
James Atherton,	Eliphalet Stevens,
Ebenezer Searles,	William Stevens,
Ephm. Taylor,	Ephraim Seely,
Ephraim Tayler, Jr.,	David Honeywell,
John Dorrance,	Jonathan Weeks,
Timothy Smith,	Jonathan Weeks, Jr.,
Jonathan Slocum,	Philip Weeks,
Benjamin Follett,	Uriah Stevens,
Nathan Hurlburt,	Gideon Lawrence,

Samuel Richards,  
 Stephen Gardner,  
 Augustus Hunt,  
 John Comstock,  
 Oliver Jewell,  
 Ezra Dean,  
 Daniel Larence,  
 Ezekiel Pierce,  
 Elkanah Fuller,  
 Benj'n Ashley,  
 Stephen Lee,  
 —— Hover,

Silas Parke,  
 Moses Kimball,  
 Nath'l Terry,  
 Wright Smith,  
 Nath'l Chapman,  
 Benjamin Shoemaker,  
 Simeon Draper,  
 Daniel Baldwin,  
 David Marvin,  
 Timothy Hollister,  
 and the Rev. Wm. Marsh,  
 a Baptist preacher.

The deponent saith that on their arrival at Wyoming they encamped at the mouth of Mill Creek, on the bank of the Susquehannah, where they built several huts for shelter, that they went on and cut grass and made hay on Jacob's Plains, that they were shortly joined by many others, that their whole company on the ground were one hundred and forty and upwards, that they continued on the ground according to his best recollection about ten days, that the season being far advanced, and finding that it would be difficult to procure provisions at so great a distance from any inhabited country, the committee of the settlers, viz: John Jenkins, John Smith, and Stephen Gardner, thought proper and advised to return, which was agreed to, and the greatest part of the company withdrew, the deponent being one, that a small number were left on the ground who tarried some time longer, as the deponent understood.

The deponent says, at the time they arrived at Wyoming there were not any inhabitants in that country

to his knowledge, except one Teedyuscung, an Indian chief, and a number of Indian families, that the deponent did not discover any appearance of any improvement being made by white people previous to the deponent and the company aforesaid going on to the land.

The deponent further saith, that at the time they withdrew they secured their farming utensils on the ground to be ready for use the spring following, as they expected to return at that time. He also said that early in the month of May, as near as he can recollect, in the year 1763, the deponent, with a small number of others, went on to Wyoming to renew their possessions, that they were soon joined by a large number, being mostly those who had been on the preceding year, that they took on with them horses, oxen, cows, and farming utensils, that they proceeded to plowing, planting corn, and sowing grain of various kinds, building houses and all kinds of farming business, that they made large improvements in Wilkes-Barre, Kingston, Plymouth, and Hanover, as they are now called, that they improved several hundred acres of land with corn and other grain, and procured a large quantity of hay. They carried on their business unmolested until some time in the month of October; that during their residence in Wyoming this season, according to his best recollection, there were about 150 settlers who made improvements, though not so great a number were on the ground at any one time; that he also recollects lands being laid out and lotted on the Susquehannah River the same year, and that he, the deponent, drew a lot at that time in Wilkes-Barre, as it is now called.

That on the 15th day of October, the settlers being in a scattered situation on their respective farms, they were attacked by the savages on surprise, in every part of the settlement, and all at or near the same time, that near twenty of the settlers were killed, the others taken or dispersed, the whole property of the settlers then on the ground fell into the enemy's hands. The deponent recollects the names of several that were killed, viz: The Rev. William Marsh, Thomas Marsh, Timothy Hollister, Timothy Hollister, jr., Nathaniel Hollister, Samuel Richards, Nathaniel Terry, Wright Smith, Daniel Baldwin and his wife, Jesse Wiggins and a woman by the name of Zuriah Whitney. The deponent also recollects that Isaac Hollister, one Mr. Shephard and a son of Daniel Baldwin were taken prisoners as he understood. Several others were killed whose names he does not recollect.

A BRIEF NARRATION

OF THE

CAPTIVITY OF ISAAC HOLLISTER

WHO WAS TAKEN BY THE INDIANS,  
ANNO DOMINI, 1763.

---

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

---

Printed and sold at the Printing-Office in  
NEW-LONDON.  
[1767.]

11-1042



## A BRIEF NARRATION &c.

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On the 15th day of October 1763, as I was at work with my father, on the banks of the Susquehannah, the Indians, to the number of 135, came upon us and killed my father on the spot. My brother Timothy, who was at work about half a mile distant, underwent the same fate; as did likewise 14 or 15 others, who were at work in different places.

The Indians, after they had burnt and destroyed all they could, marched off, and carried me up the Susquehannah river 150 miles, to a town called by them Wethououngque; and when we had arrived there, they tied me with a rope about my neck, and an Indian was ordered to lead me, while others beat me with their fists. This they continued to do until I ran about a quarter of a mile. When I arrived at one of their huts, they tied me to one of the spars of the hut, where I remained all that night. The next day they let me loose, but would not let me go out of their sight.

Here I tarried about three months, in which time I underwent many hardships, and had like to have famished with hunger and cold, having nothing to cover me but an old coat and an old blanket, which was almost worn out. My employment was to fetch wood every day upon my back half a mile, which made me almost weary of my life. At this place was brought a young Dutchman, who was taken at the same time and place that I was; and when we had convenient opportunity, we laid our heads together to contrive an escape;

to this end we stole everything we could without being discovered, and hid it in the hollow of an old log.

It was about the latter end of March, as near as I could judge (for it rained successively three or four days, which melted away all the snow and brake up the river) when we had got together about 40 ears of corn, and six cakes of bread each, about the bigness of an hand. The Dutchman tho't it now time for us to endeavor to make our escape, but I was very averse to his proposal, telling him that it would be better for us to wait till the Spring was farther advanced, and the weather grew a little more warm; that we might endure the severity of the nights when we should have nothing but the cold ground to rest our limbs on, and the heavens to cover our almost uncovered bodies; but he was so stiffly bent in his opinion of going off the first opportunity, that I was obliged to come into his measures. The next day at noon we were sent after wood at the usual place, when instead of returning back, we set out with a design to reach the nearest English settlement we could. We ran all the afternoon until evening, when we made a stop and built a fire, where we remained during the night. Early next morning we set out again, but had not gone far before the cold proved so severe that it froze the ends of my toes, and my mockasins being very thin and almost worn out, my toes wore off as fast as they froze. This so far disabled me that it was with great difficulty I could travel, yet we continued our way till about noon, when unable to go any farther, we stopped and made a fire, and after we had warmed and refreshed ourselves, we set out again, and about sun set we arrived



at a very thick swamp in which we were securely covered by the prodigious thickness of the hemlock, with which the swamp abounded. We made a large fire, and notwithstanding the fatigues of our march, and the pain that might be expected to arise from my toes being froze, and being as we apprehended out of danger of any enemy, we rested very comfortably all night. The next day very early we got on our way again; but the weather was so cold that we were unable to proceed very far before we were obliged to make a halt, and to build a fire to keep us from freezing. We stayed in this place two days, when the weather began to moderate to such a degree that we could pursue our route with less danger of being overcome with the severity of the season. Sometimes we travelled all day, at other times but two or three hours in a day; sometimes we stayed two or three days in a place, altho' many times we had tolerably good weather. This remissness began to make me very uneasy. I used all the arguments I possibly could with my companion to persuade him to expedite our escape, but all to no purpose. Sometimes I got hold of his hand, with a view to force him along, but nothing would move him. It looks to me very probable, had we made the best use of our shatter'd limbs, we might have reached some English fort or settlement before his death. In this dismal condition I knew not what to do—leave him I could not, for we had but one hatchet, and the nights still pretty cold, so that we could not endure them without a fire. Thus we mov'd on slowly for several days, until all our provision were spent: By this time we had arrived at a small creek which extends its course about S. E. and empties itself into the Susquehannah.

We had not gone far down this creek before we stopt, and built a fire, and sat down, but were soon surprised at the appearance of an Indian, who came very near before we discovered each other. He no sooner saw us than he turn'd short about, and ran down by the creek ; and as soon as he was out of sight, we made all the haste we could to a hill that lay a little before us, on the south side of which the snow was all gone and the ground dry, by which means we made our escape. The Indian soon alarmed his companions who lay at a little distance and pursued us, but the ground being so hard and dry it was impossible for them to track us, which made them soon give over pursuing. After tarrying on this hill two days, we proceeded on our way, but had nothing to eat but the bark of trees, on which alone we lived 10 days, without eating anything else. The fourth day after we left this hill we began to grow weary and faint, but the fear of an enemy banished all hunger from us. We continued travelling until the seventh day, when we stopped again, when my companion, as I suppose was overcome with fasting (tho' he never complained) and began to be unable to help himself. I nursed him as well as I could. The second day he made an attempt to go to a spring at a small distance, but was so weak he fell down several times before he could get there, and it was with difficulty he got back again ; after this he never was able to walk any more. I know not whether he apprehended his end to be so near, but the third night he died. The afternoon before his death he said but few words, tho' I often tried to discourse with him. In the evening he told me, that if I died

first, he would not have me afraid to eat of his flesh, for I am determin'd, says he, to eat of yours, if you should die before me.

And now I was left all alone, stript of every comfort of life, and knew not which way to turn myself. I thought the absolute necessity I was in, would excuse my pursuing the advice he gave me, of eating his flesh as soon as dead: I went immediately about performing the disagreeable operation, and cut off 5 or 6 pounds of his legs and thighs:—I left the rest and made the best way I, could down the creek. I had not travelled but four days before I arrived at an Indian town, where I was soon discovered; and being taken up by them, they conveyed me to one of their huts.

They demanded of me from whence I came? and after I had answered their demands, they gave me some parched corn to eat.

The next day all the Indians left their habitations, and carried me directly back to the place from whence I had made my escape.

My old masters being so vexed at my leaving them, that they were resolutely bent to have me burnt: But a council being called upon the occasion, they thought death too severe a punishment, considering I was but young, and concluded that I should not have attempted an escape, had not the Dutchman enticed me away. Therefore they contented themselves with ordering me to be whipt on the naked body.

Accordingly, next day I was brought forth, strip'd stark naked, and ordered to run; while the Indians, who were ranged in a row, at certain distances, in a most cruel and barbarous manner, belaboured me with

their whips,—by which they sometimes laid me level with the ground, by their blows.—Thus they continued to lash me, until I had run about 40 rods, when I received a prodigious blow from one of them, which settled me to the ground as quick as if I had been shot through the heart. I was so stunned by the blow, that it seems I should never have recovered again, had not an old squaw run immediately to my relief, and helped me into her hut. By this time my whole body was covered with gore and blood.

I tarried here after this about 14 days, and then they sent me up to the Senecas about 150 miles off. I lived here one year, in which time I suffered almost insurmountable hardships: being sometimes almost famished to death with hunger, at other times greatly suffering from the cold, and some times nearly perishing with both. For the most part of the time we had nothing but ground nuts and herbs to subsist upon in the summer, and red plums in the winter. Several of the Indians actually starved to death.

From this place they carried me to Alaganey, a branch of the River Ohio, and from \*Alaganey down the river to the place where it emptied itself into the Ohio. After staying here about a month, they carried me down the Ohio three hundred miles. Here I found my Indian father and mother, and was very kindly received by them, and all the other Indians. They supplied me with a good blanket and other necessary cloathing, and provisions in great plenty.

And now the happy time began to draw near, when I should be released, for after I had been in this place

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\*Alaganey is the name of a place upon the river of the same name.

three or four months, to my great joy an Indian came from Sir William Johnson, with orders that all the prisoners should be released.

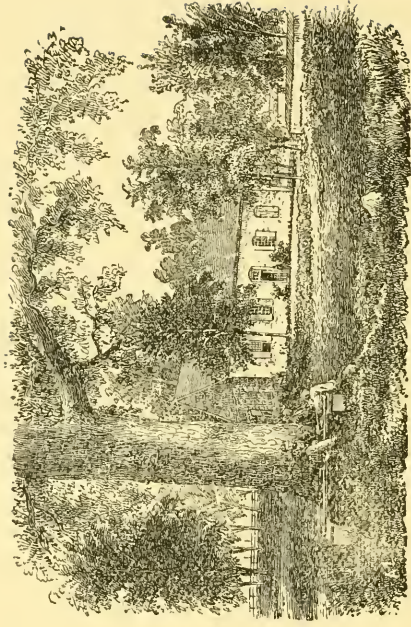
And after they had stripped me of almost everything I had about me, I was conducted by my guide to Fort Du-Quesne, where I was delivered up to the commanding officer, and cloathing was ordered for me.

But having undergone so many hardships during my stay among the savages, I looked like a mere skeleton. I remained here about eleven months; at the end of which I was sent to Philadelphia, where I tarried about three months; from thence I went to New London, where I arrived the 14th day of April, 1767, to the great joy of my mother, brothers, and sisters; Being absent three years and six months.

I would take this opportunity to return my most unfeigned thanks to all those gentlemen and ladies who were so generous as to contribute a considerable sum of money on my behalf.







OLD PAXTANG CHURCH.



# GLIMPSES OF THE HISTORY

OF

# OLD PAXTANG CHURCH.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE 150TH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE LAYING THE CORNER-  
STONE OF THE PRESENT CHURCH,

BY

WILLIAM HENRY EGLE, M. D.  
It

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HARRISBURG, PA.  
HARRISBURG PUBLISHING COMPANY.  
1890.

11-10423



K. K. Apr. 13-11

## PASTORS OF PAXTANG.

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- 1726-1732. Rev. James Anderson.  
1732-1736. Rev. William Bertram.  
1738-1792. Rev. John Elder.  
1793-1796. Rev. Nathaniel R. Snowden.  
1799-1801. Rev. Joshua Williams.  
1807-1843. Rev. James R. Sharon.  
1845-1847. Rev. John M. Boggs.  
1850-1874. Rev. Andrew D. Mitchell.  
1875-1878. Rev. William W. Downey.  
1878-1887. Rev. William A. West. (Supply.)  
1887- Rev. Albert B. Williamson, (the present  
pastor.)



## GLIMPSES OF THE HISTORY OF OLD PAXTANG CHURCH.

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Before I proceed to deliver these glimpses of the history of this ancient congregation, permit me to enter my protest against the orthography of the name on the printed invitation and programme. The corruption of the name Paxtang should not be continued. It is a *clerical* mistake in more senses than one. If others have committed the error, why shall we perpetuate it. Give us the good old Indian name, Paxtang, and not the English surname, Paxton—however much we may admire some who bear that patronymic.

FRIENDS OF PAXTANG: It is well “to remember the days of old”—to call to mind the history of a people such as we have been summoned to do this bright autumnal noon, within the shadows of an edifice made memorable by age, and by the sacred associations which cluster around it. We do not come to celebrate misty traditions which have floated down to us on the stream of time, but the real achievements of pioneers in American religious and civil history. For one hundred and fifty years has prayer been made and praise been offered in this old stone meeting-house, and as thought goes out to the saintly men who ministered to the

generations here, it seems as if some portion of the subtle essence of all the soul-longings for heavenly help and guidance which here has been breathed forth by righteous men and pious women during these many decades, has entered into the very fabric of this ancient church and thus sanctified it. Happy are that people who, having a noble history, treasure it; and with this inspiration for mind and heart, we come to do reverence here.

The first settlers in all this neighborhood, with but one exception, came from the north of Ireland—the province of Ulster. They have been termed the Scotch-Irish—Scotch planters on Irish soil. “They call us Scotch-Irish and other ill-mannered names,” wrote good old Parson Elder, but that epithet of reproach has become the synonym of a people characteristic of all that is noble and grand in our American history. Recently published works, the authors of which are not worthy being named in this connection, have denounced the Scotch-Irish as a race, without reference to authority or facts. The reproach and opprobrium thus cast upon the ancestors of the people who did so much for the improvement and prosperity of the Province of Pennsylvania, and for the defense of civil and religious liberty, as well as for the free institutions and the independence of the Republic, are at variance with all that is generally received as matter of historical truth. The accusations and reproaches, if unfounded,

ought to be refuted, and the character of the men who deserved well of society and their country should be vindicated.

But so much has been said of the Scotch-Irish race, that at this time we will only incidently refer to that people. The "Planting of Ulster" with the Scotch settlers is an important epoch, in not only the history of Ireland, but in the establishment of Presbyterianism. Their life in that country was rendered as brief as it was memorable by the rapacity and greed of landlords, by the "test act," which deprived them from holding any public office, and by the petty annoyances of prelacy. Wonder we then, that, in the early part of the eighteenth century, many of the counties of the north of Ireland were emptied of their Scotch inhabitants. Wearied out with exactions, ecclesiastical courts, and the deprivation of their civil rights, they came to America for a wider breathing space—that America which was opening wide its doors, and especially the Province of Pennsylvania, where there was less of the spirit of intolerance than in any of the colonies. Here they found a home—here all men were equal under the law. Is it surprising, therefore, that the Scotch-Irish should have prospered on this soil? Our grand old Commonwealth owes much of what she is to-day by and through the settlement of that sturdy race—and I am not ashamed to say it—albeit I claim another ancestry and another faith; and like my friend, the

Governor of the Commonwealth, am only Scotch-Irish through my children. But the historic facts are apparent to all who read. In the struggle for popular rights, the Scotch-Irish are ever to be found on the side of the people; and as we go on, we find that here, as elsewhere, in the period of great events, they rise up as leaders—characterized by boldness, energy, integrity, morality, and religious fervor, although at times with a bigoted and belligerent spirit. Can I say more? Yes! But we must proceed.

The first Presbyterian ministers who preached here, were Gillespie, Evans, Boyd, and Anderson. The first named was born at Glasgow in 1683, and educated at the University there. He was licensed by the Presbytery in 1712, came to America, and was ordained May 28, 1713, having received a call from the people of White Clay Creek. Red Clay, Lower Brandywine, and White Clay seem to have formed his charge for several years. He organized the congregation at the head of Christiana, which he served until his death in 1760. The Rev. Francis Alison, who knew him, called him "that pious saint of God." As early as 1715, Mr. Gillespie missionated as far as Paxtang. The country was sparsely settled—possibly not more than five or six families north of the Swatara—but these, with the exception of John Harris, an Indian trader, were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians.

The Rev. David Evans, of Welsh birth, was ordained



November 3, 1714, and became pastor of the Welsh tract, in New Castle county, Delaware. In 1719 he went into the Great Valley, Chester county, and in 1720 regularly supplied the people of Tredyffrin, and was sent by the Presbytery to the Octorara,\* forks of Brandywine, and Conestoga, extending his ministrations "to Donegal and beyond," to what subsequently became the bounds of Paxtang and Derry churches.

Upon the appointment of Rev. Adam Boyd† to the pastorate of Octorara—the far western bounds, "Donegal and beyond," were confided to him. This was in 1724, when a small log meeting-house had been previously built not many feet south of the present stone building. Then the devout Anderson, of Donegal, followed and labored, as the tide of Presbyterianism rolled westward—and from this time onward, until the thunders of the Revolution reverberated along these valleys, the tramp and tread of the Scotch-Irish army continued.

Prior to 1722, the following, with their families, were members of what was shortly after Paxtang con-

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\* Samuel Evans, of Lancaster, says: "This was commonly called Middle Octorara, it is in Bart township, Lancaster county, it was organized in 1726, and in October, 1727, the Rev. Adam Boyd was ordained pastor, and he gave the congregation one sixth of his time."

† Rev. Adam Boyd was born in 1692 at Ballymoney, Ireland, and emigrated to New England in 1723 as a probationer. In July, 1724, he was received under the care of New Castle Presbytery and sent to Octorara. He died November 23, 1768.

gregation; Thomas Gardner, Samuel Means, David McClure, Thomas Kyle, James Roddy, Alexander Hutchinson, William Maybane, Robert Brown, Samuel Smith, Joseph Kelso, Sen., and Thomas Simpson. Fleeing from civil oppression, in their new homes it is not surprising that these people hastened to manifest their thankfulness to God, and their sincerity and regard for their privileges under a government of free institutions, by erecting a "meeting-house," dedicated to His holy service. Around this log structure were the graves of the early pioneers, but these remained unmarked. Seventy years ago, it is stated on the best of authority, there was a rudely chiseled head-stone, with the date of departure, 1716; which simply proves that this revered spot was chosen for the worship of God at that early period. In gathering up the fragments of the history of Paxtang Church, it is to be regretted that the minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia from 1717 to 1733 are declared lost; while the minutes of New Castle Presbytery from its organization in 1716 to the constituting of Donegal are not to be found, although we have the assurance that they were in existence in 1876. It is well to guard the early records of the Church, but why refuse examination of them to those making historic researches? The truthful historian knows full well what to use and what to omit, and if my Presbyterian friends will not allow those outside the pale of their ministry to go over the early records

of the Presbyteries of Philadelphia, New Castle, and Donegal, they should place them in the hands of some faithful co-laborer who knows what to edit and what to let alone. In the history of institutions, as well as of individuals, there may be blots which ought to remain so forever.

By direction of New Castle Presbytery, the Rev. James Anderson,\* in 1726, gave one fifth of his time to Paxtang, and in 1729, commenced to supply Derry regularly, one fifth being there allowed—leaving Donegal but three fifths.

On the 11th of October, 1732, the Presbytery of Donegal was constituted out of a portion of the Presbytery of New Castle. The meeting was held at Donegal church. The ministers present were, Messrs. Anderson, Thomson, Boyd, Orr, and Bertram. Mr. Thomson was elected moderator, and Mr. Bertram clerk. The first item of business brought before the new Presbytery of Donegal was in relation to Paxtang and Derry. These churches having united in a call to the Rev. William Bertram, which had been placed in his hands at the last meeting of the then "old" New Castle Presbytery. George Renick and others of Paxtang and Derry appeared and required an answer thereto. Mr. Bertram accepted, and was installed November 15, 1732, at

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\* For a full sketch of the Rev. James Anderson, and a record of his descendants, see "Pennsylvania Genealogies," under "Anderson of Donegal."

Swatara, the original name of Derry Church. Thomas Forster, George Renick, William Cunningham, and Thomas Mayes were appointed for the Paxtang side, and Rowland Chambers, Hugh Black, Robert Campbell, John Wilson, William Wilson, James Quigley, William McCord, and John Sloan for the Derry side, to assist Mr. Bertram in congregational affairs until the erection of a formal session.

At the meeting of Presbytery at Upper Octorara, September 6, 1733, "Mr. Bertram presented a list of men nominated by the congregations of Paxtang and Derry to be set apart for ruling elders. Presbytery ordered that they be again published, and intimation given that if any objection be made against any of them, said objection be given in due time."

The amount of subscription to Mr. Bertram's salary does not appear, but the congregation, in addition thereto, made over to him and his heirs their "right and title to the plantation commonly called 'The Indian Town,' purchased from the Indians."

Hitherto, and until 1736, Paxtang and Derry were considered simply as two branches of the same congregation; this arrangement was unwieldly, and gave rise to various disputes and misunderstandings about financial matters. They had fallen into arrears with Mr. Anderson, and were ordered no less than five times, at as many different meetings of Presbytery, "to pay up;" difficulty was experienced in getting all parts of the

congregation to contribute their just dues towards the repairs of Mr. Bertram's house, and to defray the expenses of a law-suit about certain sawed plank or boards. These and other troubles of a like nature were a source of annoyance to both congregations, as well as to Mr. Bertram ; so much so that at Nottingham, October 9, 1735, Mr. Bertram and his elders united in asking Presbytery to appoint a committee "to go into and reason with the people of said congregations and inquire into their circumstances, as to their ability to be separated into two distinct bodies and support themselves, in order that Mr. Bertram, being eased of part of his burden, may be able to go on with more comfort in the discharge of his duty to whichever part of said people he shall be determined to continue with."

A committee was appointed and reported to Presbytery November 20, 1735. Accompanying their report they presented a supplication from the session asking for a division, and that their bounds might be fixed. At the same time, Lazarus Stewart prosecuted a supplication from Manada Creek (Hanover) for a new erection. The subject of a separation between Paxtang and Derry was postponed from one Presbytery to another, until finally on the 2d of September, 1736, it was agreed to. So popular was Mr. Bertram with his people that both parties were anxious to secure his services, Paxtang engaging to pay for his yearly support sixty pounds, "one-half in money, the other half in hay, flax, linen

yarn, or linen cloth, at market price." Derry promised fifty-five pounds, to be paid in like manner. Mr. Bertram was perplexed, and asked for time to consider. Presbytery gave him to the next meeting of Synod, which took place on the 16th of September. Owing probably either to the location of his farm, or the extent of the church glebe, he chose Derry, and Paxtang was declared vacant. From this date, until December 22, 1738, the congregation was supplied by Messrs. Sankey, Alexander, Craven, and Elder.

In 1729, the Synod passed "the adopting act," by which assent to the Westminster Confession of Faith was required by all members of the Synod, and of all candidates for admission to the Presbyteries. This confirmation of a principle had its opponents, and it is in connection with this, that we find, in the year 1736, mention of this congregation in the confirmatory act or declaration which seems at least for the time to have produced general satisfaction. In the minutes for that year it is recorded, that, "An overture of the committee, upon the supplication of the people of Paxtang and Derry, was brought in, and is as followeth: That the Synod do declare that inasmuch as we understand that many persons of our persuasion, both more lately and formally, have been offended with some expressions or distinctions in the first or preliminary act of our Synod for adopting the Westminster Confession and Catechism, etc.; that in order to remove said of-

fense and all jealousies that have arisen or may arise in any other people's minds on occasion of said distinctions and expressions, the Synod doth declare, that the Synod have adopted and still do adhere to the Westminster Confession, Catechisms, and Directory, without the least variation or alteration, and without any regard to said distinctions. And we do further declare this was our meaning and true intent in our first adopting the said Confession, as may particularly appear by our adopting act, which is as follows: 'All the ministers of the Synod now present [which were eighteen in number,] except one who declared himself not prepared, after proposing all the scruples that any of them had to make against any articles and expressions in the Confession of Faith and larger and shorter Catechisms of the assembly of divines at Westminster, have unanimously agreed in the solution of those scruples, and in declaring the said Confession and Catechisms, to be the Confession of their Faith, except only some clauses in the twentieth and twenty-third chapters, concerning which clauses, the Synod do unanimously declare, that they do not receive those articles in any such sense as to suppose the civil magistrate hath controlling power over Synods with respect to the exercise of their ministerial authority, or power to persecute any for their religion, or in any sense contrary to the Protestant succession to the throne of Great Britain.' And we do hope and desire, that this, our



synodical declaration and explanation may satisfy all our people as to our firm attachment to our good old received doctrines contained in the said Confession, without the least variation or alteration, and that they will lay aside their jealousies, that have been entertained through occasion of the above hinted expressions and declarations as groundless. This overture approved *nemine contradicente.*”

On the 22d of December, 1738, the Rev. John Elder was ordained and installed the pastor of Paxtang congregation, (having served over a year as a supply,) at a salary of sixty pounds, and so for a period of fifty-five years went in and out before the people ministering to their spiritual wants. For that duration of time, (over half a century,) the history of this church and of its pastor is a part of the history of the Province of Pennsylvania, and in order to be brief, permit me simply to summarize the leading events. Some of these are of great moment, but not at this time and place will more than a passing glance or review be made.

Within the church in common there transpired much also of interest. Although from the period referred to, (1738,) the growth was truly phenomenal—not only of Paxtang, but of Presbyterianism in general, yet the harmony of the governing bodies began to be interfered with, owing to the fact that “its ministers were from different countries, where to some extent different



modes of thinking on the same subjects prevailed. The points on which the difference of opinion chiefly developed itself, were the examination of candidates for the ministry on experimental religion, the strict adherence to Presbyterian order, and the amount of learning to be required by those who sought ministerial office. These subjects were discussed with great, and frequently with intemperate, zeal in the different Presbyteries." Two distinct parties were now formed. Those who were more zealous for orthodoxy—for the rigid observance of Presbyterian rule, and for a thoroughly educated ministry, were called the "Old Side," while those who were more tolerant of departures from ecclesiastical order and less particular in respect to other qualifications for the ministry, provided they gave evidence of vital piety, were called the "New Side" or "New Lights."

As might be expected, there was a growing necessity for the education of the ministry, and the result was the establishment of the College of New Jersey by the Synod of New York—first at Elizabethtown, in 1746; removed the following year to Newark; and thence to Princeton, in 1757. The "Old Side" patronized the academies of New London and of Newark, in Delaware, under the Rev. Francis Alison and Rev. Alexander McDowell, and also the academy and college of Philadelphia. The rivalry between these literary institutions

served to render more intense the mutual hostility of the two parties.

In 1739 the celebrated Whitefield paid his second visit to America. In connection with his labors, a great revival ensued, the friends of which in the Presbyterian church were chiefly with the "New Side," while the "Old Side," or strict Presbyterian, perceiving some really censurable irregularities in the active friends and promoters of the revival, pronounced the whole a delusion. This brought on the crisis. The controversy waxed more and more violent until 1741, when the church was rent into two parts, the "Old Side" constituting the Synod of New York.

Soon after Mr. Elder began his labors in Paxtang, it was found that the old log structure was insufficient, and steps were taken toward the erection of the present building. It stands about twenty feet back from the site of the original meeting-house, and was begun in the year 1740. It was several years before completion, and was occupied for a long time as a house of worship with neither floor nor pews; seats made of logs hewn on one side were used by all the people excepting the family of the pastor, who occupied a settee. The original meeting-house for many years was used as a retiring and session house by Mr. Elder, and late in life so deferential were the congregation to their revered minister, that on his passage from this building to the

stone church, and upon retiring, all heads were uncovered and bowed.

Although we stated on a former occasion that the Rev. Mr. Bertram remained pastor of Derry congregation until his death, in 1746, we find, that owing to ill-health, he relinquished the care of that people, and in the latter part of 1745 the Rev. John Roan came to be its minister. It was not, however, until the year 1754 that the dissensions between Old and New Sideism resulted in the division of the congregations at Paxtang and Derry; although both Roan and Elder had previously drawn the lines. The Rev. Mr. Elder and a large majority of his people adopting the "Old Side" views, remained in possession of the property. The "New Side" people of Derry, being in a majority at Derry, with their pastor, the Rev. John Roan, "held the fort" at that place. The "New Side" portion of Paxtang took sides with Roan, while the "Old Side" members of Derry clung to Elder. This fully explains the following call to the Rev. Mr. Elder, of the date of 26th September, 1754, and signed by one hundred and twenty-eight communicants of Derry and Paxtang:

*To the Reverend Mr. JOHN ELDER:*

"SIR—We, the inhabitants in the Township & Congregation of Paxtang & Derry, Being now Destitute of a settled Gospel minister amongst us; Being also Deeply Sensible of the great loss & Disadvantage we & ours may sustain, In regard of our souls & spiritual Con-

cerns by our living in such a Condition in this Wilderness; & having had Sufficient Proof of, & being well pleased & satisfied with the ministerial abilities & qualifications of y'u, the Revd. Jno. Elder, Do unanimously Invite and Call y'u to take the Pastoral Care & oversight of us, Promising all due subjection, submission & obedience to the Doctrine, Discipline & Government & Ordinances Exercised & administered By y'u as our Pastor in the Lord. And that y'u may be the Better Enabled to attend upon y'r Pastoral & ministerial work amongst us, without Anxious and Distracting Cares about y'r worldly Concerns, We Do hereby Cheerfully Promise & Engage to take Care of y'r Support and maintenance for an Honourable & Creditable manner Suitable to & befitting y'r Honourable Function & office as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst us; Knowing that the Lord hath ordained that they who Preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel."\*

In testimony of all w'h we have hereunto Subscribed our Names This 26th of September, 1754.

Thos. fforster.	David Walker.
Wm. Armstrong.	Robert Chambers.
John Harris.	Moses Dickey.
Thos. McArthur.	William Stoe.
James Wallace.	Thomas Simpson.

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\*This Call is in the possession of the Dauphin County Historical Society.

James Collier.	David Patton.
Thomas Dougan.	James Potts.
Henry McKinney.	Joseph Wilson.
Andrew Stephen.	John McCormick.
John Bell.	John Cavit.
John Morrow.	James Galbraith.
Henry Renick.	Robert Wallace.
John Johnson.	John Harris.
Oliver Wylie.	James Foster.
Samuel Simpson.	James Freeland.
Thomas Renick.	Robert Armstrong.
Patrick Montgomery.	Hugh Wilson.
Richard Cavit.	James Wilson.
William Bell.	Robert Chambers, jr.
Thomas King.	Arthur Chambers.
Edward King.	William Reney.
Robert Montgomery.	Robert McCallen.
John Wiggins, jr.	John Hutchison.
James Gilchrist.	Charles McClure.
James Mitcheltree.	Hugh Black.
John Neal.	Robert Snodgrass.
William Hannah.	Thomas Black.
John Carson.	Jean Black.
James Drummond.	Wm. Laird.
Samuel Hunter.	Matthew Laird.
Alex. Johnson.	Elizabeth Park.
George Gillespy.	William Harris.
Patrick Gillespy.	Robert Gilchrist.

John Gilchrist.	Joseph Kerr.
William McAlevy.	John Gray.
John Foster.	William Wilson.
David McClanochan.	Michael Whitley.
David Reany.	Thomas Alexander.
John Craig.	Valentine Stern.
John Wylie.	Andrew Houston.
Thomas Mays.	Alex. Johnston.
Hugh Hays.	Samuel Stephenson.
Andrew Moore.	Thomas Rutherford.
David Foster.	Mathias Taylor.
John Hays.	Stephen Gamble.
Henry Walker.	Alex'r Mahon.
John Walker.	Chas. Clarke.
John Walker.	Mary Mellvain.
James Walker.	James Harris.
Hugh Carothers.	Samuel Shaw.
James Carothers.	Thomas Aikens.
James Williamson.	Th. Streat.
Samuel Galbraith.	Thomas McClalen.
Hugh McKillip.	William Brison.
Matthew Cowden.	John McClintock.
James Houston.	James Davis.
James Tom.	James Rodgers.
John Starling.	Hugh Rodgers.
Andrew Hannah.	Joe McNut.
Peter Corbit.	Widow Rodgers.
Wm. Kerr.	Seth Rodgers.

Joe Snoddy.

David Jamison.

Robert Harris.

Robert Walker.

Wm. Galbraith.

The "New Side" people of Paxtang secured two acres of land about two miles east of this, and immediately erected thereon a rival church, at which, and that at Derry, Mr. Roan continued his labors until his death, in 1775. At the same time a new impetus was given to immigration southward and westward. When this stone building was erected in 1740, and for ten or fifteen years following, the church was crowded with devout worshippers. This locality was full of young people, active, intelligent, and enterprising. The reports, however, of unsettled lands, lying far distant, painted the south and west as being more beautiful in their solitariness than Paxtang had been, and the children of the Scotch-Irish settlers, like their ancestors, sought a new home in the lovely valleys beyond the Susquehanna, and among the rich lands of Virginia and the Carolinas. As a matter of course, coupled with the dissensions previously mentioned, the congregations of Paxtang and Derry were seriously crippled. The minutes of Donegal Presbytery from September 28, 1745, to June, 1747, and from October 9, 1750, to June 5, 1759, having been lost, while Mr. Elder's private papers, being also lost or inaccessible, it is somewhat difficult to trace the history of Paxtang during this period, probably the most trying one in its existence.

Then followed the French and Indian war, when pastor and people were called upon to defend their homes against the blood-thirsty savage. Then it was that this house became not only a place of worship to Almighty God, but a retreat from the inroads of the marauding red man and a dwelling-place of mercy and a refuge from storm. "Many a family mourned for some of their number shot by the secret foe or carried away captive. Their rifles were carried with them to their work in the field and to the sanctuary. Mr. Elder placed his trusty piece beside him in the pulpit. Death often overtook his flock as they returned to their scattered plantations. In 1756 the meeting-house was surrounded whilst he was preaching, but their spies having counted the rifles, the Indians retired from their ambushade without making an attack." On another occasion, in the same year, they came for the purpose of attacking the worshipers in church, but by mistake they arrived on Monday instead of Sunday, and after waiting several days, finding they were discovered, left the settlement by way of Indiantown Gap, murdering a number of persons on the Swatara and carrying off several prisoners.

In the winter of 1763-64, transpired the "Paxtang Boys" affair—the wiping out of a nest of murder-marauding Indians at Conestoga and Lancaster—and which created such a "hub-bub" in Quakerdom, that more pamphlets and broadsides were called forth, than



any one episode in Pennsylvania history. In this controversy, the pastor and people of Paxtang became involved. The story is a long but interesting one, and there is a "rod in pickle" for some recent historians who cannot distinguish between an arrant falsehood and the plain truth.

On June 22, 1764, at a meeting of Presbytery held at Derry, Mr. Elder and four other ministers declared their intention to cease from active membership in the judicatory. This decision was not acted upon by Synod until May 19, 1768, when they were joined to the Presbytery of Philadelphia, so that for about a period of four years Paxtang was not represented in any of the church courts. The trouble arose out of the old party feeling of the "Old" and "New Sides," which, notwithstanding the union, was still rampant in the Presbyteries.

Shortly after came on the war of the Revolution, and the men of Paxtang, who had taken an early Resolve for Independence, went into the conflict with heart and soul—and from Boston and Quebec, down to the close of the struggle at Yorktown—they fought, bled, and died for Liberty. In all the wars which have rent the land, Paxtang was a nursery for heroes, and God grant that the generations coming on may ever emulate the patriotic spirit of their gallant ancestors.

Upon the formation of Carlisle Presbytery, in 1786, Paxtang was joined thereto, and has remained in that

connection ever since. After the death of Mr. Roan, October 2, 1775, Paxtang and Derry were again united solely under the charge of Mr. Elder. The congregation at Harrisburg, formed April 12, 1787, was added to Mr. Elder's charge, as was also the New Side branch of Paxtang.\*

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\* The following papers are very important in this connection :

On Thursday, April 12th, 1787, during the sessions of the Presbytery at Carlisle, a representation and petition of a number of the inhabitants of Harrisburg and others in the township of Paxtang was laid before Presbytery and read. The said representation sets forth that these people desire to be considered as a Presbyterian Congregation, and to have supplies appointed them by the Presbytery ; and that in order to promote peace and harmony between them and the Paxtang congregation, some proposals had been made to, and considered, though not accepted by that congregation, a copy of which was also laid before the Presbytery. Mr. Elder also gave a representation of the state of the case as concerning these people and Paxtang congregation. The Presbytery, upon considering the case, agreed to propose the following articles to the consideration and acceptance of those people, which may have a tendency to preserve peace and union in that part of the Church :

1. That Harrisburg shall be considered as the seat of a Presbyterian Church, and part of the charge of the Rev. John Elder, in which he is to preach one third of his time.

2. That Mr. Elder's salary, promised by the congregation of Paxtang, shall be continued and paid by the congregation in common, who shall adhere to these two places of worship, viz : Paxtang and Harrisburg.

3. That the congregation thus united may apply for, and obtain supplies as assistant to the labors of Mr. Elder, to be paid by the congregation in common.

4. That when the congregation may judge it proper, they shall have

On the 17th of July, 1792, the Rev. John Elder laid by the armor of this earthly life, and entered upon his eternal rest. Born in the city of Edinburgh, January 26, 1706, he was educated at the University there,

a right to choose and call a minister as a colleague with Mr. Elder, to officiate in rotation with him.

“Dr. Davidson and Mr. Waugh are appointed to attend at the church in Lower Paxtang, on the last Tuesday in May next, to moderate and assist in the above matter.”

On the 19th of June, 1787, Dr. Davidson and Mr. Waugh reported to Presbytery at Big Spring, that their appointment at Paxtang had been fulfilled, and that the following articles had been agreed to by Mr. Elder and his congregation, at Harrisburg :

1. That the congregation shall have two stated places of public worship, the one where the Rev. Mr. Elder now officiates, the other in Harrisburg.

2. That the Rev. John Elder shall continue to have and receive during his life or incumbency, all the salary or stipends that he now enjoys, to be paid by his present subscribers, as he and they may agree, and continue his labors in Derry as usual.

3. That for the present the congregation may apply to the Presbytery for supplies, which, when obtained, the expenses shall be defrayed by those who do not now belong to Mr. Elder's congregation, and such as may think proper to join with them ; and should such supplies be appointed when Mr. Elder is to be in Paxtang, then he and the supply shall preach in rotation, the one in the country, and the other in town. But should Mr. Elder be in Derry, then the supplies shall officiate in town.

4. That the congregation when able, or they think proper, may invite and settle any regular Presbyterian minister they or a majority of them may choose and can obtain, as a co-pastor with Mr. Elder, who shall officiate as to preaching in the manner specified in the third proposal.

studied divinity, and in the year 1732 was licensed to preach the Gospel, although he did not come into the Presbytery of Donegal until October 5, 1737, and then as a licentiate from the Presbytery of New Castle. However that may be, he came to America following his father's family, in the year mentioned, and yet his only pastorate was that of Paxtang. He was a man whose whole life reads like a romance. I regard him as the most prominent figure in our early provincial history. He towered far above all men in the era in which he lived, and his name and fame will long endure. The heroes of New England are but pigmies compared with this giant. Whether we view him as a minister of the Gospel, as, a brave soldier, or in civil life—or yet as a thinker and a man of intellectual powers—his personality was extraordinary. There was something in his life which called forth an enthusiastic and passionate devotion—in a few words, he was a grand old man, an honor to the Church of Christ and to the race of men! If this era does not take care of him, futurity will—for if any man was born a leader, it was the Rev. John Elder, of Paxtang. His descendants of four generations are with us to-day, to do reverence to the church of their fathers.

Upon the death of Mr. Elder, Paxtang congregation, after hearing various candidates, finally united with the Derry and Harrisburg churches in a call to the Rev. Nathaniel R. Snowden, of Philadelphia, each agreeing

to pay him fifty pounds per annum.\* He was installed pastor, October 2, 1793, but finding, in 1796, the labor of attending to three congregations too great for his bodily strength, he relinquished Paxtang and Derry, retaining Harrisburg, which he served satisfactorily for

\*The following is a copy of the original subscription list—but it comprises only the names of those present at the congregational meeting held on the 7th of March, 1793 :

We the under subscribers do each of us promise to pay annually the sums annexed to our names, to the trustees of Paxtang congregation, or the collectors appointed by them, as a salary due to the Rev. Mr. Snowden, for the one-third part of his labors amongst us, and while he continues a regular preaching pastor in said congregation and we members of it. Given under our hands this seventh day of March, A. D. 1793.

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
James Caldwell, . . .	1	2	6	Jacob Awl, . . . . .	2	5	0
John Means, . . . . .	0	15	0	John Rutherford, . . .	1	15	0
John Willson, . . . . .	1	5	0	William Smith, . . . .	1	15	0
William Calhoun, . . .	0	15	0	James Cowden, . . . .	1	10	0
Richard Carson, . . . .	0	15	0	Josiah Espy, . . . . .	1	10	0
Joshua Elder, . . . . .	2	0	0	Thomas McArthur, . . .	1	2	0
John Elder, Jr., . . . .	1	2	6	Barbara Walker, . . .	0	7	6
John Gilchrist, . . . . .	1	0	0	Mary Peacock, . . . . .	0	7	6
Alexander McCay, . . .	0	8	4	James Cochran, . . . .	1	0	0
Thomas Forster, . . . .	1	17	6	John Wilson, Jr., . . .	1	10	0
William McRoberts, . .	0	15	0	Andrew Stephen, . . .	0	17	6
Richard Fulton, . . . .	1	5	0	James Johnston, . . . .	0	16	8
Thomas Brown, . . . . .	0	18	9	William Boyd, . . . . .	0	8	4
William Waules, . . . .	0	10	0	Adam Barbe, . . . . .	0	10	0
Daniel Brunson, . . . .	0	17	6	Alexander Mahargue, . .	0	15	0
Alexander Willson, . . .	1	5	0	William Kerr, . . . . .	1	15	0

many years.\* Mr. Snowden was a profound theologian, a faithful minister of the Gospel, and greatly beloved by his people. We are honored to-day by the presence of

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\* LETTER SENT TO PRESBYTERY IN 1795.

PAXTANG, Oct. 5, 1795.

“*To the Revd. Presbytery of Carlisle about to convene at Marsh Creek in the County of York :*

“WHEREAS, Mr. Snowden has signified to his congregation in Derry Township that he is no longer able to officiate in his Ministerial capacity to them on acct. of Inability of body, & that he purposes to apply to Presbytery for a Discharge from said congregation which we conceive, if he might be indulged in his Request, wou’d leave the congregation of Paxtang in a very distressing & Perilous Situation ; that the two congregations have lived for many years past in perfect peace, friendship and unanimity, and that we do not wish for a schism between us now ; that if the union is once broke there will be no probability of us being united again ; that if Mr. Snowden is rendered incapable of undergoing the fatigue of the three congregations in less than three years in the prime of life, by all probability he will not be able in a short time to attend to two congregations, and of consequence we shall be left without a pastor and the means of giving a call to another. We, therefore, pray to be considered as united with Derry, and that if Mr. Snowden should insist on being disunited from them, that Presbytery will appoint a committee of their body to enquire into the matter before anything decisive may take place ; and that the majority of this congregation’ how much soever they may be attached to Mr. Snowden, wou’d rather he should leave us as he found us. than submit to a dissolution of the union subsisting between us.

“ By order of a meeting of Paxtang congregation.

“JOHN RUTHERFORD,

“JOSHUA ELDER.”

his distinguished grand-son, Major-General George R. Snowden, of Philadelphia.

One of Paxtang's children, resident in the west, pres-

SUPPLICATION SENT TO PRESBYTERY, 1796.

“PAXTANG, *Jan'y, 1796.*

“*To the Moderator of Carlisle Presbytery about to meet at Big Spring:*

“By order of the Committee of Presbytery which sat at Paxtang the 3d of Nov'r last, the Congregation of Paxtang was notified the last Sunday but one which we had meeting that the sense of the Congregation wou'd be taken on the next Sabbath whether we wou'd adhere to Harrisburg & break the Union with Derry, or whether we wou'd continue the Union with Derry & break off with Harrisburg. Accordingly after sermon last Sunday the heads of families were desired to attend, and after the business was explained to them, we proceeded to take the votes of the People, & it appeared that a Majority of the Congregation was for continuing the Union with Derry and relinquishing Harrisburg; they likewise chose the bearer Capt'n John Rutherford as their Commissioner to wait on Presbytery with this Remonstrance, praying that Presbytery wou'd grant us Supplies & dissolve the Congregation of Paxtang from their Obligations to Mr. Snowden & that he might discontinue his labors to them unless ordered to supply them as any other Gentleman.

SUPPLICATION SENT TO THE PRESBYTERY OF CARLISLE, 1796.

“PAXTANG, *Sept. 3, 1796.*

“*The Reverend Presbytery of Carlisle:*

“GENTLEMEN,—Whereas we are now destitute of the Gospel Ordinances being regularly administered to us, and what few supplies were allotted for us at the last Presbytery we fell short even of these on account of the age and inability of one of the members appointed to supply us; We, the subscribers, in behalf of this Congregation who met for that purpose do most earnestly beg and entreat that Presbytery would



ent here to-day, says of Mr. Snowden: "Those of Paxtang congregation whose memories run back sixty years, will remember as an occasional visitor, this very

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be pleased to grant as many Supplies as they can with convenience; we likewise wish that if there be any young or unsettled members belonging to Presbytery these might be sent to us that we might have an opportunity of the Gospel once more regularly established and administered in all the forms thereto belonging; and your Supplicants as in duty bound shall ever pray."

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APPEAL OF THE PAXTANG CONGREGATION TO THE MODERATOR.

"PAXTANG, Oct. 1, 1797.

"*To the Moderator of the Reverend Presbytery of Carlisle:*

"SIR,—We again acknowledge our dependence and renew our request in praying Presbytery to give us such and as many supplies during the winter season as they can with convenience. The bearer, Mr. James Rutherford, is appointed our Commissioner to present this remonstrance to Presbytery and to answer such interrogatories as may be required of him.

"Signed in behalf of Paxtang congregation by

"JOSHUA ELDER."

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LETTER TO THE MODERATOR OF CARLISLE PRESBYTERY, 1798.

"PAXTANG, Sept. 25, 1798.

"*To the Moderator of Carlisle Presbytery:*

"SIR,—The bearer, Edward Crouch, is our commissioner, appointed by the congregation of Paxtang to wait on the Reverend Presbytery of Carlisle with a call for the Reverend Joshua Williams for the one-third of his labors in union with Derry, whom we expect will apply for the remaining two-thirds; likewise to solicit the Presbytery to grant us Supplies in the meantime. Signed in behalf and with the approbation of the congregation by

JOSHUA ELDER."



worthy gentleman. In his sixties he looked hale and vigorous, grey eyes, iron grey hair, a full face, and weight one hundred and sixty pounds. The writer remembers his voice as strong and sonorous, and that he delivered his words with measured deliberation. He never failed to state to his auditors two facts. First. That Philadelphia was the place of his birth; and secondly, that he had heard Independence bell ring on the morning of July 4, 1776."

A call was then given to the Rev. Joshua Williams, who accepted the same, and he was ordained and installed October 2, 1799, Derry to receive two thirds of his time and pay one hundred and twenty pounds, and Paxtang one third and pay sixty pounds. This pastorate only lasted one year and eight months, ending on the 30th of June, 1801. Mr. Williams seemed to have had trouble collecting his stipends, for we find him complaining to Presbytery, in 1803, about his salary arrears. The moderator was directed to write to these churches and say, "that if these arrearages are not discharged before the next meeting of Presbytery, that body would be under the disagreeable necessity of withholding from them that attention and regard which they pay to churches under their care." This did not have much effect, for we find them still unpaid in September, 1805. A grand-son of his, Col. Joshua Williams, of the city of Minneapolis, has come to do reverence here to-day.

On May 29, 1807, Mr. James R. Sharon was installed, both congregations agreeing to pay the same salary as that promised to Mr. Williams.

In 1808, the "meeting-house" and "retiring-house" were put in thorough repair.\* The latter, built about

\*As a matter of interest to their descendants, now widely scattered, we give the names of those contributing thereto :

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Robert Elder, . . . .	3	15	0	Sarah Wilson, . . . .	1	2	6
James Cowden, . . . .	3	15	0	John Forster, . . . .	1	10	0
Edward Crouch, . . . .	3	15	0	Charles Chamberlain, . .	0	15	0
Elizabeth Gray, . . . .	1	2	6	John Ross, . . . . .	0	9	4½
John Gray, . . . . .	1	5	0	Michael Simpson, . . . .	1	10	0
John Wiggins, . . . . .	1	17	6	Jean Carson, . . . . .	0	7	6
James Rutherford, . . . .	2	5	0	Joseph Burd, . . . . .	2	5	0
Samuel Sherer, . . . . .	1	17	6	Robert Gray, . . . . .	1	10	0
John Gilchrist, . . . . .	1	10	0	Thomas Walker, . . . . .	0	17	6
Samuel Rutherford, . . . .	1	10	0	William Caldhoon, . . . .	1	0	0
William Rutherford, . . . .	1	10	0	John Rutherford, . . . .	0	15	0
Robert McClure, . . . . .	1	10	0	Michael Simpson, . . . .	6	0	0
John Richey, . . . . .	1	17	6	James Awl, . . . . .	0	7	6
Thomas Smith, . . . . .	2	5	0	Joseph Burd, . . . . .	2	5	0
Susanna Rutherford, . . . .	0	11	3	David Patton, . . . . .	1	2	6
Thomas Elder, . . . . .	1	10	0	Robert Gray, . . . . .	1	10	0
John Carson, . . . . .	0	10	0	Thomas Walker, . . . . .	0	17	6
Josiah Espy, . . . . .	1	10	0	John Walker, . . . . .	0	17	6
James Awl, . . . . .	1	2	6	Jacob Richards, . . . . .	1	10	0
John Allison, . . . . .	0	17	6	Jean Wilson, . . . . .	1	5	0
James Cochran, . . . . .	0	15	0	Frederick Hatton, . . . .	0	11	3
Ann Stephen, . . . . .	0	15	0	William Calhoon, . . . .	1	0	0
John McCammon, . . . . .	0	15	0	John Finney, . . . . .	0	10	0
Mary Fulton, . . . . .	1	17	6	Joseph Wilson, . . . . .	1	2	6

the period of Mr. Elder's decease, was a small log building near the church, used for meetings of session, and as a study by the pastor during the interval between the morning and afternoon service, and on week-days as a school-house. The "repairs" at this time consisted partly in the running up two board partitions, thereby creating a vestibule at each end, with the audience-room in the center. The partitions were of yellow pine, as was also the ceiling, which was placed in position at this time. The pews were left standing in the western vestibule, and were remaining within the memory of some of the present congregation. There was little uniformity in the Paxtang pews of that day, as each had been built by the family occupying it, and by their own architect. Two huge ten-plate stoves were placed in the long aisle, the smoke from which ascended through pipes to the loft, and made its escape as best it could through a small hole in the comb of the roof.

Mr. Sharon was a man of eminent piety, and was greatly beloved by this people. His pastorate covered a period of almost thirty-six years, and ended only with his life, April 18, 1843. During these years the gospel

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Mary Rutherford, . . . 0	7	6	William Whitely, . . . 0	12	6
William Larned, . . . 1	0	0	David Stewart, . . . 0	15	0
James Stewart, . . . 0	15	0	Thomas McCord, . . . 0	15	0
Joshua Elder, . . . 3	0	0	Elizabeth Wills, . . . 1	10	0
Thomas Buffington, . . 0	15	0	Hugh Stephen, . . . 0	15	0
John Elder, . . . . 1	10	0	John Rutherford, . . . 0	15	0

of peace reigned, and little is left for the historian but to record the fact.\*

My venerable friend, Dr. Hiram Rutherford, to whom I am much indebted for information relating to the "long ago," gives me these recollections of this devoted minister: "The tall, lank figure of Mr. Sharon was one of the fixtures and features of Paxtang, sixty years ago. His soft, white, delicate skin, blue eyes, dark hair, narrow chest—his soft, weak but clear voice, hacking cough, etc., marked him as one short for this world. Yet he was punctual in his duties, preached good, sensible sermons, attended all christenings, marriages, and funerals. With all odds against him, he lived his three score and ten, and at last was gathered to his fathers, ripe for the harvest, with eternal 'sunshine on his head.' His residence was in Derry, and he usually came up to Paxtang of a Saturday evening. In winter he wore a dark colored overcoat, with a moveable cape. His lower limbs were cased in velveteen (dark) overalls, or as then called, *cherre-valles*. Mounted on his chestnut sorrel horse, with riding whip in hand, and that hand and arm at an angle of forty-five, he moved over the road at a steady jog trot, mile after mile, a slender, gaunt figure, so unique, that he was recognizable as far

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\*Mr. Sharon preserved a full record of his ministerial acts—marriages, baptisms, admissions, and dismissions—which is printed in the Appendix to this volume.

away as he could be seen. At recess he staid in the log study house, generally alone, and in his passage thence to the church, he always carried his spectacles in his hand, greeting but few as he passed, with eyes bent on the ground before him. Then the loud call of Mr. Jordan would be heard, 'Mr. Sharon has gone in.' I have heard my father speak of Mr. Elder's passage under similar circumstances from the study house to the church. Mr. Elder was an austere man. As he emerged from the log building he carried in his hand a book, with his fingers among the leaves, and his eyes fixed ten feet ahead of him. With measured, deliberate steps, he looked neither to the right or left, and greeted no one on the way."

On October 1st, 1844, the Presbytery of Carlisle met at Paxtang. A call was placed in the hands of Rev. John M. Boggs, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Donegal. Mr. Boggs accepted, but asked that his ordination be postponed until the spring meeting, in order that he might attend the Theological Seminary at Princeton during the winter. His request was granted, and he was ordained April 9, 1845, and installed soon after as pastor of Paxtang and Derry. His pastorate was uneventful, and was dissolved on October 6, 1847.

The field was now vacant for a period of more than two years, during which time extensive alterations and repairs were made. The whole inside of the building was removed, the western door and the small window

back of the pulpit walled up, new shingles placed upon the roof, and a floor laid throughout the entire building, the halls and ceiling plastered, the pulpit taken down from its perch on the north wall, and a new one placed at a much lower elevation against the western wall. New pews of modern style and uniform character were built, and the old pulpit, pews, and furniture, which had been in use since Mr. Elder's time, were sold at public auction.

On September 28th, 1849, a call from Paxtang and Derry was placed in the hands of Rev. Andrew D. Mitchell, Paxtang promising three hundred dollars and Derry two hundred per annum. Mr. Mitchell accepted, and was ordained and installed April 10, 1850. Mr. Mitchell was a single man when he accepted these charges, but married a few years afterwards. Hitherto Paxtang had never needed a parsonage. Mr. Bertram lived near Derry on his farm; while Mr. Elder and Mr. Sharon, who had occupied the field for a century, were both practical agriculturalists and lived on their farms; and Mr. Boggs was unmarried. It now, however, became necessary to provide a house for Mr. Mitchell, and the present parsonage was erected, and was occupied by him during the remainder of his pastorate, which ended February 12, 1874. Near the close of Mr. Mitchell's pastorate the inside of the church was partly remodeled and arranged pretty much as it now stands.

In November of the same year (1874) a call was made

out for the Rev. William W. Downey by Paxtang, Derry having died out. Mr. Downey accepted, and was installed April 29, 1875. In 1878 this pastorate was dissolved, and the congregation for several years was acceptably supplied by the Rev. William A. West of Harrisburg.

On the 16th of June, 1887, having previously accepted a call, the Rev. Albert B. Williamson, a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, was ordained, and continues in the pastorate.

Intimately connected with Paxtang Church was the school which flourished from the earliest times down to the establishment of free schools in Dauphin county. It was never under the control of the church as an ecclesiastical body, but the same men who composed the congregation were the patrons of the school, and the building itself was the property of the congregation. It may therefore fairly be considered as an appendage of the church, and the old masters stood next in rank and dignity to the clergyman. Here flourished such men as Francis Kerr, Joseph Allen, Benjamin White, James Couples, Francis D. Cummings, and others celebrated in their day and generation as educators, and from whose instructions went forth many young men afterwards distinguished in every walk of life.

Originally the congregation owned a tract of twenty acres in the shape of a parallelogram, whose length was about three times its width. Nearly forty years ago a



portion of this tract was sold, leaving a square of six or eight acres, covered largely with forest-trees, among which are several giant oaks that were doubtless trees when Columbus landed on the shores of America. Near the center of the tract stands the church, the parsonage occupies the southeast corner, and between the two lies the graveyard. In early times no distinct limits were set to the burying-ground, and the people buried their dead anywhere, according to their fancy, in the clearing to the south and southeast of the church. Graves were seldom marked, and a few years obliterated all trace of them. As families became permanent and the number of these graves increased, more care was taken, tombstones began to be erected and lots fenced in. The want of uniformity, however, in these fences, and of regularity in the selection of lots, rendered the grounds very unsightly, as well as very difficult to keep clear of weeds and briars. This state of affairs existed until 1791-92, when the ground was inclosed by a stone wall, the greater portion of which is still standing. This wall does not by any means include all the graves of Paxtang. It did, however, surround all that were marked by tombstones or protected by fences. In 1819 a new roof was placed upon the wall; the contractor was Matthew Humes. The ground enclosed had very nearly all been buried over once, and some of it twice before the wall was erected. In course of time, therefore, it became impossible to dig a grave



without disturbing the remains of several of the unknown and forgotten dead. The old south wall was (then) taken down, and during the summer of 1852 the grounds were extended ninety feet, and the whole covered with wood, and so it stood until the summer of 1882, when the wall was again repaired, and a new roof of wood placed thereon.

This church building is the oldest house of Presbyterian worship in the entire State of Pennsylvania. It has seen the revolution of years carrying away the generations of men, their habitations and their churches. Although the benches and the desk speak of modern origin, yet the doors hang upon the solid posts in unison with the stone walls, and while as now the storms of a century and a half have left their marks, give no signs of speedy decay.

And now, my friends, after this summary of events transpiring in old Paxtang for one hundred and seventy years, let us go into yonder God's Acre, far older than the church itself. With our greatest American poet—Longfellow :

“I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls  
The burial ground God's Acre ! It is just ;  
It consecrates each grave within its walls,  
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.”

In my boyhood days there was over the entrance, on a semi-circular board these lines :

“Persons entering this consecrated ground are en-

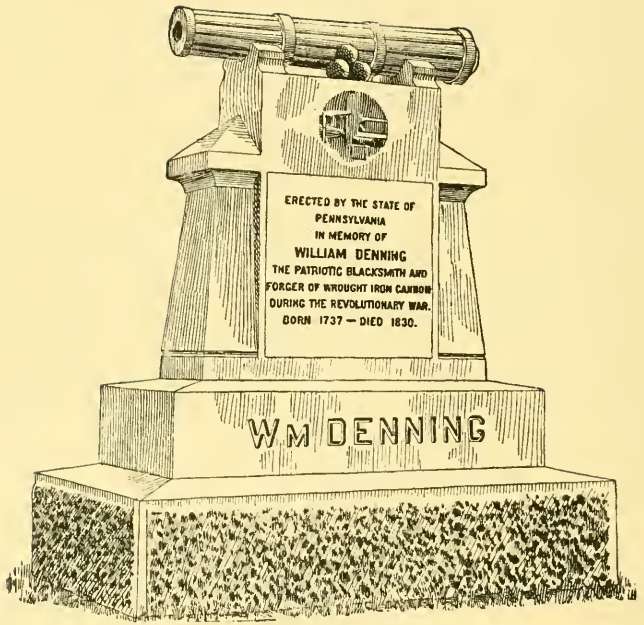
treated not to walk or stand upon the graves or grave-stones—such to the living are sacred.”

Bearing this injunction in mind, we will simply look over the wall, for there is not a foot of ground where the dead lie not. To the left of the entrance and towards the north side are several generations of Elder; to the east rest the remains of Parson Elder of blessed memory,—in the northwest corner his sons Colonels Joshua and Robert Elder, both men of mark in the Revolutionary era. East from this, not far from the center, rest the remains of John Harris, the founder of Harrisburg; and near by those of his son-in-law, William Maclay, Senator from Pennsylvania in the First Congress of the United States. Close by and around the latter are those of his sons-in-law, Dr. John Hall and William Wallace. A little to the south of Elder's grave rest the Montgomerys, one of the oldest families in Paxtang; and on a line with them and to the south are the remains of Andrew Stewart and his wife Mary Dinwiddie, sister of Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia. They were the ancestors of the Reverend John Stewart, who, notwithstanding his early teachings by his Covenanter father, accepted ordination at the hands of the Established Church, returned to America under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, missionated among the Mohawks in the Valley of the Hudson, became a loyalist during the Revolution, and from him have descended several

of the most prominent personages in Canadian history. East of this line of graves is that of Thomas Rutherford, the ancestor of all the clan, many of whose descendants remain steadfast to the principles and worship of old Paxtang Church—and one of whom, [Abner Rutherford, who died September 2, 1890, aged 76] the sturdiest oak of all, has recently fallen in the battle-storm of life; while farther east are the remains of William Brown, to whom the United Presbyterians are indebted for bringing to this country those staid old Covenanters Dobbins and Lind. Between these are the remains of Captain Crouch, Captain Cowden, and a little to the south those of Robert Gray, Captain Brisbane, General Michael Simpson, and other heroes of the Revolution who fought and bled in defense of liberty. Eight generations lie in that myrtle-covered graveyard, and yet they represent only a fraction of those who once worshiped in this place. The thousands who sought homes in the wide expanse of our glorious heritage, took deep inspiration here, and the influences for godliness which from this church have gone forth, will not be known until the Resurrection morn. This congregation may wander away, and this building pass into decay, but the teachings of the saintly men who have here gone in and out, will live on, *forever*, AND FOREVER!







THE  
PRIVATE SOLDIER  
OF THE  
ARMY OF THE DECLARATION.

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT  
ERECTED BY THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA TO WILLIAM  
DENNING, THE SOLDIER BLACKSMITH OF THE REVOLU-  
TION, AT NEWVILLE, OCTOBER 6, 1890,

BY

WILLIAM HENRY EGLE, M. D.

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HARRISBURG, PA.  
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## THE BLACKSMITH OF THE REVOLUTION.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: We have come together this day to take part in paying respect to the memory of a war-veteran of the Revolution; and it well becomes us to glance over the history of that struggle for Independence and learn somewhat of the services of a private soldier of the Pennsylvania Line during that heroic contest from 1775 to 1783.

When the issue became imminent, in none of the British colonies were the people more enthusiastic than those of the Province of Pennsylvania. The thunders of Lexington had scarcely ceased reverberating along the Blue mountains, (North and South,) when the pioneers of the wilderness—German and Scotch-Irish—gathered from hill-side and valley, resolved, “to do and dare,” in defense of their homes. Equipped in backwoodsmen dress, with their trusty rifles, they were not long hesitating to march to the relief of the beleaguered New England army at Boston, and although the distance and difficulties of travel were greater, they were the first troops west of the Connecticut river to reach the front. And it becomes us to consider who were these men, and what led them so promptly to respond to the call of their oppressed countrymen, and who, although differing from them in ancestry and in faith, yet whose wrongs were theirs and whose rights they held in common. They were men whose parents had fled from religious and civil persecution in the Old World, and who had imbibed through the maternal breasts, an intense hatred for oppression and

tyranny in whatsoever form they came. They were neither rebellious or revolutionary, but patriots through principle. They were not illiterate, but men of intelligence, these private soldiers, and I judge this from the fact, that upon the muster-rolls, and in receipts for depreciation pay, in existence, it is rarely that any one "made his mark," the name being written in English or German, as the case might be. They were also upright, liberty-loving, and God-fearing. They hated priest-craft and king-craft—and cherished the homes they made upon the confines of civilization, but when the cloud of injustice and intolerance lowered, they hurried away from the loved ones, leaving them, in numerous instances, to the mercy of the marauding Indian savage, to participate in the great up-rising against British tyranny.

Shall I rehearse to you, the terrible march through the wildernesses of Maine and Canada to Quebec, in the early winter of 1775, where, under Arnold, then the gallant and brave, afterwards the despicable traitor, they suffered from hunger, and cold, and wounds, and imprisonment—many of them dying far away from the endeared and endearing?

Shall I repeat to you the pitiful story of Fort Washington and Long Island, where against greater numbers and heavier guns, the red-coats swept down upon our poorly equipped patriots, yet with stout hearts those strong arms dealt disastrous strokes, and although suffering defeat, their defense of freedom's cause had a depressing effect upon the enemy, who suddenly realized the fact that they were fighting against men whose motives were just and purposes pure?

Shall the splendid victories at Trenton and Princeton be forgotten—where the men from Pennsylvania vied with the bravest of the brave—and by their splendid achievements wrote high upon the roll of fame, their deeds heroic—which down to remotest time, will tell of valor won, and how patriots fought, bled, and died for Independence?

I shall be pardoned if I mention Saratoga and the surrender of Burgoyne, but it has been too frequently stated that Pennsylvania was absent upon that particular occasion. Our troops were there, nevertheless, and under the gallant Morgan, the superior riflemen from beyond the Susquehanna did very effective work. From Boston to Yorktown, on every well-fought battlefield, our good old ancestors took a part.

Then again, those terrific struggles for mastery at Brandywine and Germantown—where the private soldier of the Pennsylvania Line, according to that young officer from France, whose name is so intimately interwoven with the history of our Revolutionary conflict—the intrepid and noble Lafayette—“What might have turned a drawn battle into an ignominious and disastrous defeat, was averted by the gallantry of the Pennsylvania phalanx, to their honor and renown be it said.”

Shall I picture to you the cantonment at Valley Forge—and that rigorous winter of 1777–’78, when the little band, chiefly from Pennsylvania, bare-foot and half-clad, aye poorly fed, cheered the heart of their grand old commander—the great and good Washington—by their vigilance, by their patient and uncomplaining performance of the severest duties? Truly it

may be said, that no other army ever existed, which, under the circumstances—a populous city in front, and a fruitful country to the rear—would have remained quiet and subordinate, as did the soldiers at Valley Forge. Ah! the patriotism of those gallant men—their hardships and self-denials—have left a halo around the name of the American soldier which shall gleam the brighter as the ages roll on and on. I consider it as one of the richest legacies my paternal ancestor left me—to which I can point with rapturous pride—that he was a private soldier at Valley Forge!

What were the results of those self-denials—the vigilance and alertness of those brave men? First their enthusiastic veneration for their commander, their confidence in him, and he in them—crushed out forever that feeling of jealousy—aye, disloyalty—among the officers who were clamorous for the displacement of Washington. Secondly, They made possible the evacuation of Philadelphia by Howe's army of masterly inactivity, which was by far a greater blow to the enemy than any defeat by arms save that perchance at Yorktown.

Shall I refer to the pursuit of the British in 1778, when like the retreat through the Jerseys in 1776, by the Patriot Army, the Pennsylvania forces protected the rear, and now the advance—their excellent marksmen holding the enemy's cavalry at bay, while the army of Lord Howe kept moving on to safer quarters until they were obliged to make a stand at Monmouth, where, had it not been for the disobedience of an officer in command, the victory would probably have been with the Provincials? As it was, such a lesson was

taught them, that the British never ventured to attack the latter upon open ground.

And here while we allude to these martyr-patriots dyed with crimson—let us not forget, that there were two women, one at Fort Washington, and one at Monmouth, who emulated their husbands in heroism and patriotic valor. I refer to Margaret Corbin and Mary McCauley. These women accompanied their husbands to the army, as many others did. In those days, the washing and cooking were chiefly done by women whose husbands were private soldiers in the war. Margaret Corbin was from the Cumberland Valley, and was with her husband who was in one of the companies attached to Col. Magaw's Battalion of the Line. It was she, who, before the surrender at Fort Washington, when her husband fell seriously wounded, took his place at the gun and fired the last shot at the enemy. Lossing, who confounds her with "Moll Pitcher," says what is not true of either. Margaret Corbin after her release went to Westmoreland county, where she lived many years enjoying the respect of her neighbors and friends—the State of Pennsylvania acknowledging her valiant services in the Revolution, by granting her an annuity which enabled her to live comfortably in her declining years.

As to the heroine of Monmouth, Molly McCauley, or "Moll Pitcher," as she was commonly called, the story of her life is so fully known to the people of this Valley that I shall only make brief reference. You have all heard how, when at the battle of Monmouth, her husband, John Hay, a bombardier in Procter's artillery, fell at his post, she dropped her bucket in which she

carried water to the men—hence the soubriquet “ Moll Pitcher ”—seized the rammer, avowing that she would fill his place and avenge his death. She performed the duty with such skill and courage, that it attracted the attention of all who saw her, and upon the morrow, when the little army was in a safe position, she was presented to Washington, who commended her for her bravery. Not only by Congress, but by her State was she provided for in her old age. Her remains rest in the quiet graveyard at Carlisle, but the heroic deeds performed by the simple-minded but lion-hearted “ Moll Pitcher ” will live, when the champions of other wars and other times shall have been forgotten. It is well to recall these historic facts, and I do it with the greater pleasure, because it gives me the opportunity to rescue their names from the reproach and obloquy cast upon them by the sensational and slipshod historians of to-day. All honor to Margaret Corbin and Mary McCauley !

After eight years of severity and struggle, of self-denial and suffering, the conflict for freedom ended,—the victory at Yorktown virtually terminating the war on the part of the British soldiery. Peace brought with it the endearments of home, the enjoyment of constitutional liberty unequalled in the world’s history, and the blessings of fruitful lands. And yet, the men whose lives had been exposed during that eventful era to all the vicissitudes of war, returned illy prepared to again encounter the trials and turmoils of business or labor. The greater portion were broken down in health—and others with maimed and torn limbs dragged themselves through the world homeless and friend-

less, depending entirely upon the beggarly pittance of a mean pension, the best perchance the young government could afford—but far from being a reward for the services performed in accomplishing independence. It has been wondered why, that from the close of the Revolution, for several decades, most of the inns and taverns were kept by the soldiers of that war. Then the keeping of an ordinary was considered an honorable employment, and, incapable of manual pursuits, this vocation suited them. It was there, too, that on Freedom's natal day these heroes annually gathered to recount the incidents of the war, and if they did occasionally get a little full of old rye in remembrance of "auld lang syne," we cannot blame them. They lived in another age, and in another atmosphere than we. Some of my lady friends may not like to hear it, but it is nevertheless true, that many of the Revolutionary ancestors of the present leading people kept a tavern in the olden time, and yet this is to their credit, not otherwise.

I now come to speak of the events which to-day have called us together—for what purpose, and in whose honor.

When hostilities began, with the exception of the trusted rifle of the pioneer, most of the arms were in possession of the troops and the civil officers of the crown of Great Britain. For a supply of small arms there was little difficulty in securing. Among the German inhabitants of Pennsylvania, there were many whose trade of gunsmith had been in the settlements a lucrative and busy occupation—and so when the demand came, these men by direction of the Congress



established large manufactories at Allentown, Reading, Lebanon, Hummelstown, Middletown, Lancaster, and other points in Pennsylvania, while men qualified as artificers, were excused from other military service, and sent where their skilled labor was required. If, therefore, the Germans of Pennsylvania were tardy in enlisting for the war, they were industrious and indefatigable in the making of arms and ammunition—and unstinted in the furnishing of food and blankets to the Army of the Declaration. To them there is gratitude due—and we should not be slow in acknowledging it.

In the matter of large or field guns, the case was different. There were numerous furnaces and forges of iron in the colonies, but few experiments had been made except with cast-iron—and these were dangerous from overcharging. At the outset, companies of artillery artificers were enlisted, and to them were committed the forging of arms and the preparation of weapons for defense. Conspicuous among these was Col. Jeduthan Baldwin's regiment of the Continental Line. Of this command, the New Jersey company of Captain Jeremiah Bruen, was stationed at Mount Holly, that State, where iron-works had been established for years. In this company was William Denning, a blacksmith, yet a skilled mechanic, and whose worthy deeds in that war suggested the erection of this monument to his memory. Little is known of his history, save that he volunteered early in the contest for liberty, and was at Mount Holly, until just prior to the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, when by order of the Congress all the artificers were ordered to Washingtonburg, (afterwards the United States Barracks,) near



Carlisle, where their work was resumed. Here William Denning was transferred to Captain Worsley Emes' company of the Pennsylvania Line, and in recognition of his services in connection therewith, was pensioned by the State and National Governments. A skilled workman he undoubtedly was, and cannon manufactured under his supervision were used not only during the Revolution, but in the War of 1812-14, although greater facilities enabled the making of better guns than those so rudely constructed during the years 1776 and 1777. It is more than probable that some of these were forged at Middlesex, Cumberland county, this State, but the Mount Holly mentioned in all references, was undoubtedly Mount Holly, New Jersey. Be that as it may, William Denning, by his ingenuity and skill in iron-work, deserves this monument. His is the record of a patriot, and an expert craftsman. He passed most of the days of his long life in this locality, and died here on the 19th of December, 1830, in his ninety-fourth year. Verily an extended life—but one of honor and usefulness. He saw the country, when much of it was an untrodden wilderness;—He beheld the gleaming of the British guns, as the Cross of St. George replaced the Lilies of France on our Western borders;—he heard the roll of the drums which aroused the land to deeds of valor in freedom's cause;—He witnessed the descent of the Dove of Peace upon a land disenthralled—redeemed—the home of a liberty-loving and God-fearing people. And this panorama of the doings of nearly a century passed before him. Yonder granite monolith, surmounted by a representation of a wrought iron cannon, is the first

monument erected by any State of the Union to record the deeds of a private soldier of the Army of Independence, and we are proud of the fact.

I trust that what has been here done, will teach the youth of the State lessons of patriotism, that it will firmly instil into them the principles of constitutional liberty, and lead them to honor and venerate the achievements of the heroes of those dark and trying hours in our history as a people. If these but follow, then will this monument serve a nobler and a grander purpose than the mere marking the resting place of a soldier of the Revolution.

William Denning was one of the founders of the Republic, as were all the men who fought upon the side of Independence; just as much so as those who in the councils of the nation loomed up above their fellows—just as much so as those to whom monuments have been reared all over our country to perpetuate to futurity the virtues and bravery of an officer of the Revolution—just as much so as the few whom historians have vaunted into fame and glory by disparaging the many who were good and true, loyal and patriotic.

If there is any doctrine to be taught by the services of this day, it is this, that if our ancestors established this Republic through the baptism of blood, then ought we to perpetuate the Union, at whatever cost of life or property. God grant that the civil strife which scourged the land a quarter of a century ago may never find its counterpart in the ages following on. But, there is need of patriotic resolve, of vigilance, and Christian duty in every era; and if this granite block means anything, it tells us of the untiring industry

which goes rewarded, of self-sacrifice to the call of one's fatherland which accomplishes the prosperity of nations and the success of peoples, and above all, that loyalty to country and to God is the supreme aim and object of every citizen. Let us not forget, as we turn away from the ceremonies of this hour, that valor and industry go hand in hand; and these characteristics entered largely in the make-up of him, whose remains rest in this charming God's acre—WILLIAM DENNING, the Soldier-Artificer of the Revolution!



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Wm. Samuel W. Pennyfather  
with the kind regards of  
William W. Egle

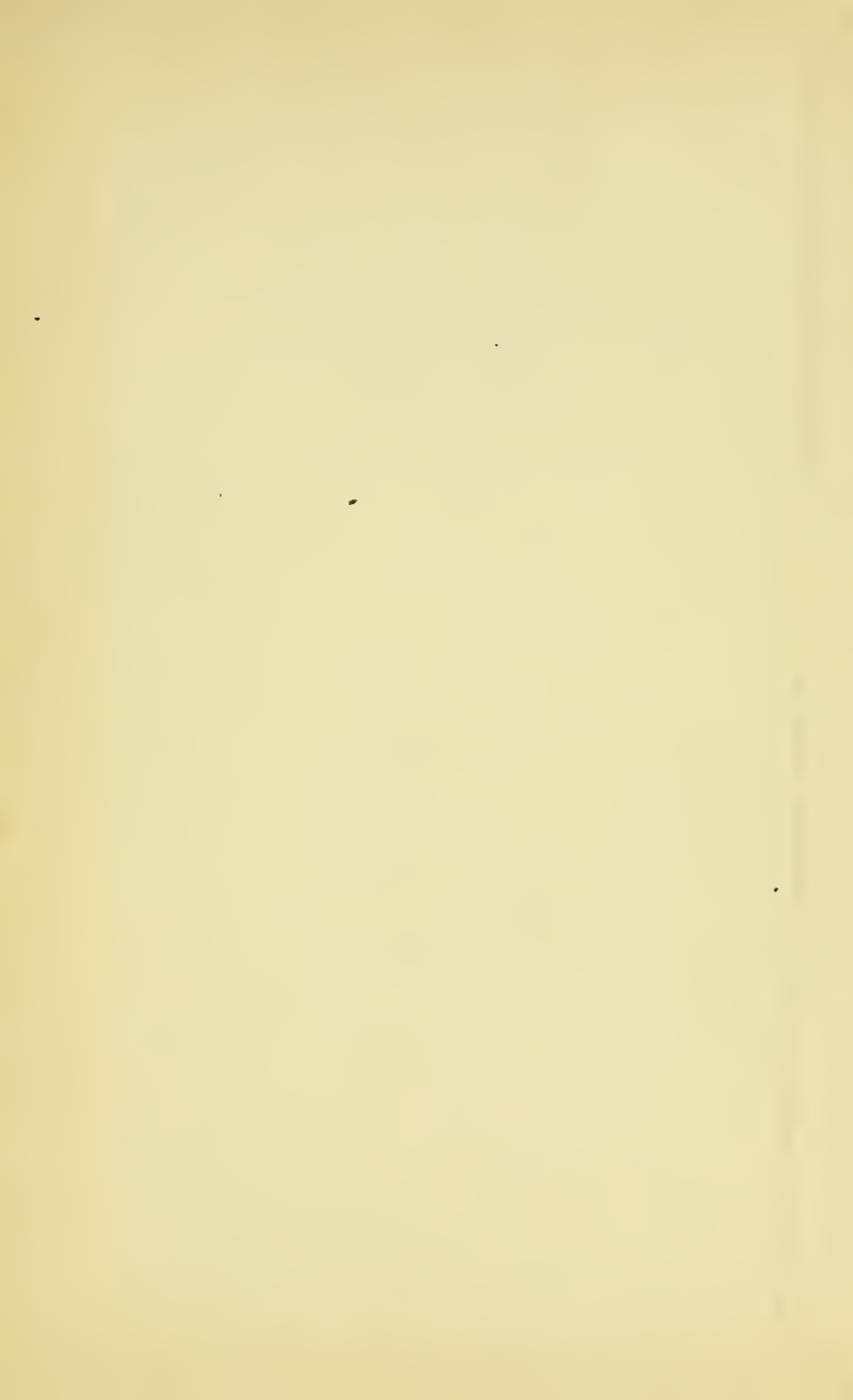
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